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A CHALLENGE  
TO ADVENTURE

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MRS. IRVING CURTIS

*Fiction, American*



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C. M.



## **A CHALLENGE TO ADVENTURE**

*“ . . . There are seasons in human affairs when qualities, fit enough to conduct the common business of life, are feeble and useless; when man must trust to emotion for that safety which reason at such times can never give.”*

**SYDNEY SMITH**

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**ROSALIND DISCOVERS THE SPY AT WORK**

# A CHALLENGE TO ADVENTURE

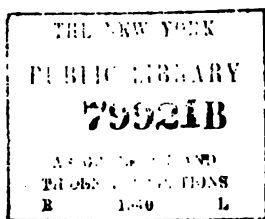
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MRS. IRVING CURTIS



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# A CHALLENGE TO ADVENTURE

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## CHAPTER ONE

**W**HEN Caroline Allan's husband died and she found that her chief possessions, beside her little daughter, Rosalind, were a few hundred dollars and an unnecessary amount of household furniture, she disposed of the latter, and moved at once from the pleasant suburban house where her married life had been spent, into three small rooms in a Roxbury apartment house, and began, with no little anxiety, to consider how she could earn a sufficient amount for the support of her child and herself. She finally solved the problem, after a fashion, by making dresses for her more fortunate neighbors; and by making waists and wrappers for a Boston clothing house.

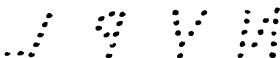
Mrs. Allan's rooms fronted on a narrow, treeless street, lined with cheaply built wooden apartment houses; and it was here that her little daughter grew to womanhood. In spite of the bareness and poverty of the little home Rosalind always remembered her childhood as a golden time, when all the pleasant things of life were waiting just around

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the corner for her future delight. Mrs. Allan bore life's denials with a cheerful spirit; and had early resolved that Rosalind's childhood should not be shadowed by vain complainings against the inevitable. As she sat at her work she told the little girl stories of her own youth on a country farm; of high pastures overlooking the sea, of gardens and wayside paths where spring began in March, and of noisy brooks and singing birds. Rosalind often wondered to herself why her mother had ever left so beautiful a place; and resolved that as soon as she was "grown up," say at about the pleasant age of thirteen, she would set forth and discover just such another place, where she and her mother would live in undisturbed happiness forevermore.

Mrs. Allan's only near relative was a younger sister, Margaret, whom she had not seen since the early days of her marriage, and from whom she heard only when Margaret Law's needs compelled her to ask assistance from the only person who never failed her. As a school-girl, hurrying home to tell the day's adventures, Rosalind learned to know by the quiet of her mother's manner, the anxious look of the brown eyes, when a letter had arrived from Aunt Margie; and, as she grew older, to resent the demands of this unknown aunt upon their slender and uncertain income.

Mrs. Allan was quick to see this impatience, and



endeavored to quicken Rosalind's sympathies by saying that "poor Aunt Margie" was alone, and that she had a very hard time.

Rosalind listened impatiently and resolved that if evil fortune ever assailed her she would overcome it without writing letters about it. She was quick to realize that the chief reason why her dresses must be worn until they were more faded and shabby than those of any of her schoolmates, was because of Aunt Margie's "hard times"; and before the time came when Rosalind was ready to enter the Roxbury High School she had awakened to the fact that her mother's unceasing toil and careful thrift were all that made the little home possible. And now she became eager to help; to go to work, as so many of her companions were doing, as a cash girl in a department store, or as an errand girl in one of the smaller shops.

"I could earn four dollars a week. You could send that to Aunt Margie; and then you wouldn't feel so worried when her letters come," the girl pleaded. But Mrs. Allan shook her head, and there was a little silence before she could respond:

"No, Rosalind; you must learn all you can. I'll manage all right."

And manage she did, with such skill that Rosalind found herself as neatly dressed as the average of her schoolmates, and said no more about going to



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work until she should graduate from high school. But the girl knew how small a margin of safety was provided by her mother's unfailing industry, and she absolutely refused to join any of the school societies that meant a payment of dues; or to accept the suggestions of friendly schoolmates that she should attend the school dances or entertainments; of which there seemed an unending number. The result of these self-denials was that she ended her school days without having made any close friends. She was not conscious of the need of any intimates; or that her companions at school had considered her "proud" and "stand-offish."

There was a good-natured girl of about her own age who lived in the same house; and with her Rosalind would sometimes walk to Franklin Park on a Saturday afternoon; and now and then Mrs. Allan would ask Amy Dill to come in for supper; for Amy had confided her troubles to Rosalind, and Mrs. Allan was sorry for the child, whose own mother was dead, and who felt herself unwelcome in her step-mother's home.

Rosalind worked diligently over the stenography and book-keeping included in the business course of the school; and in the autumn after her graduation she was fortunate in securing a position in the employ of a Boston law firm. This firm, Frisbie Brothers, occupied offices in a tall building on

Tremont street. They apparently regarded their new stenographer as merely a necessary part of a well-equipped law office. They regretted her slender knowledge of law terms; and the younger member of the firm resolved to write a letter to his favorite evening journal, commenting on the evident failures of the public school system.

The elder brother, an unpaid secretary for many charitable organizations and missionary societies, realized that one stenographer had disappeared and another arrived. Charles had employed her, and Charles would be responsible for her work; therefore Mr. Roland Frisbie turned to his own problems with a free mind. In the more youthful period of his life his over-anxious parents had feared that Roland would insist upon becoming a worker in the Salvation Army, or going as a missionary to remote lands; but he had turned his attention to the politics of his native city; and this had proved an apparent safeguard against too great an interest in equally worthy but more distant heathen.

He was a successful lawyer; a man trusted in all his endeavors, a man envied by many. Nevertheless Roland Frisbie had a sense of defeat when he recalled his youthful enthusiasms; some way, he hardly knew how, he had fallen short of the pattern he had set for himself. Charles, the younger brother, was troubled by no such uncomfortable

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thoughts. He believed that he had been born with a right to all the good things that a patient industrious world could offer for his approval. He meant to increase and enlarge the business, which the brothers had inherited from their father, and when he employed Rosalind he had questioned her sharply.

"I think she may do fairly well," he told his brother, "but I can't understand why girls who mean to go into a lawyer's office don't familiarize themselves with law terms, and learn French. This girl would be worth twice her present salary if she had a working knowledge of French."

But as Rosalind had been able to spell without hesitation, and seemed able to take dictation quickly and correctly, she had been employed. The firm had a New York office in charge of another brother; and the firm name was not unknown in the larger cities of the West.

Rosalind found her work unexpectedly interesting. To start out in the early morning, leaving her mother pleased and a little anxious over this beloved child's success; to walk briskly the long length of Washington Street with a stream of other city-bound workers, gave Rosalind a new sense of importance. Miss Amelia Madden, the trusted and valued bookkeeper for Frisbie Brothers, always greeted her pleasantly. It was Miss Madden who

told Rosalind of the best places to secure a mid-day lunch at a reasonable price; and who laughingly warned her of the lurking danger in the uncertain manners and wandering eyes of various clients of the firm. But Miss Madden soon realized that Rosalind was a different type of girl from the giggling, gum-chewing young woman who had preceded her. Rosalind was apparently unconscious of the existence of the people who passed her desk on their way to and from the private offices of the firm.

"She 'tends to her work," was Miss Madden's brief word of commendation when questioned by Mr. Frisbie. Even beyond her interest in her daily duties the thought that she was earning ten dollars a week added to Rosalind's content and satisfaction. Now she could make things easier for her mother, she thought; and when her first pay day arrived she spent the greater part of her week's earnings in a wonderful bonnet for her mother; and the remainder for theatre tickets for a much talked of play.

"You mustn't spend your money for me, dear," Mrs. Allan had said, when Rosalind came home triumphant, hat-box in one hand and the theatre tickets tightly clasped in the other. But Mrs. Allan's brown eyes shone with happiness, in spite of her words of wisdom, and, as they set forth for the evening's pleasure, holding close to her tall

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daughter's arm, she had a moment's sense of freedom and of happier days to come.

On their return home that evening Mrs. Allan spoke of her sister, and told Rosalind something of Margaret Law's story. She spoke of the younger sister's charm and beauty; of her unfortunate marriage, and separation from an unworthy husband. Rosalind listened silently; even then the girl was sure that her mother had been deceived; that Margaret Law was unworthy of the unselfish affection that her sister bestowed upon her; and as she listened Rosalind renewed her childish vow to be as unlike this unknown aunt as was humanly possible, especially in regard to Mrs. Law's apparent speciality "having a hard time"; and she began to wish that she could take immediate steps in this direction by earning a larger salary. She recalled Mr. Charles Frisbie's evident disappointment that she had so slight a knowledge of French; and realized that such a knowledge would make her of greater value to the firm. The next morning she got out her French grammar, and renewed her schoolday struggles with verbs.

Amy Dill was at work in a Boston store, and boarded in a South End lodging house. Now and then the two girls ate their noon-day meal together but Amy did not come to the little apartment in Roxbury as she had during her schooldays. Amy

had made friends among her new associates, and began to resent Rosalind's lack of interest in her affairs, while Rose, absorbed in her work and study, and, as the winter passed, in her anxiety over her mother's failing strength, had less and less interest in Amy's eager accounts of her good times with the "girls and fellows" in the store; and by the end of the first year of Rosalind's business life they met only by chance.

Miss Madden's interest in Rosalind had gradually lessened as she realized that the new stenographer was evidently absorbed in her own pursuits.

"She's a nice girl, but she doesn't want to bother with a stout old thing like me," the good-natured woman decided, with a sense of undeserved failure in her effort to make friends.

Rosalind was twenty-one when her mother died. And for the first time Mr. Roland Frisbie seemed to recognize her existence. He journeyed to Roxbury with kindly offers of friendly assistance; but Rosalind, pale and quiet, assured him that she needed no help; that she could attend to all necessary duties; and Mr. Frisbie, vaguely disappointed in his failure to be of service, returned to more urgent duties.

To Rosalind life came to a full stop. It seemed no longer possible to go on. She had made no plan for future happiness that had not centered

around her mother; and she was conscious only of an agonized sense of loss and defeat. Mrs. Allan had no near friends, and had Amy Dill not come to the little apartment Rosalind would have been utterly alone. Perhaps Amy had realized this; for at the news of Mrs. Allan's death she had promptly appeared, and remained with Rosalind until after Mrs. Allan's simple funeral.

"You mustn't stay here, Rosalind," Amy had insisted when they returned to the lonely shabby rooms, the only home Rosalind could remember; "Your mother wouldn't want you to. Come in town and take a room in the house where I board." And Rosalind, indifferent and half-stunned, agreed to the plan.

It was Amy who packed her trunk, and who arranged for the sale of the furniture; and Rosalind, with but little effort on her own behalf, found herself the tenant of a pleasant chamber in Mrs. Weeveley's lodging house on Pembroke street.

For several weeks Amy seemed to forget all her own interests in an effort to comfort her former playmate. Each morning she was on hand to walk to the office with Rosalind; and every night she appeared at the door of Rosalind's room, half uncertain as to her welcome, but resolved to do her best to bring a little human friendliness to the

sorrowing girl. It is doubtful if Rosalind realized Amy's kindness and unselfishness. But she was to recall them later on, with a keen sense of her own unworthiness.

The long unhappy winter dragged to an end; and at last Rosalind brought herself to write the news of her mother's death to her aunt, whose constant letters with complaining demands upon the sister, who could never more sacrifice and toil to respond to them, arrived with unflinching regularity. Rosalind wrote briefly, telling her aunt nothing beyond the fact of her mother's death. She said nothing of her own plans.

Aunt Margie answered the letter with words of tender sympathy; but to this letter Rosalind made no response. "I'll forget that there is such a person," she resolved, and for a long time she was able to keep this determination.

Rosalind now told herself that her girlhood, dull and joyless as it had been, was over. She said to herself that whatever comfort and security was possible for her future must be the result of her own efforts. Happiness was for more fortunate people; but she resolved to try and make herself as content as possible. It did not occur to the lonely girl that there were possibilities in the friendship of Miss Madden; or that Amy's unflinching loyalty was a gift to be cherished. Relying only on



what she could herself accomplish she devoted herself to her work and study, with the result that her salary was doubled, and Mr. Charles Frisbie looked upon her with approval.

One spring morning of the second year following her mother's death, as Rosalind walked down the noisy street toward her office she noticed an elderly woman standing near the curb with a large basket filled with spring flowers, and holding out a bunch to attract the notice of possible purchasers. Rosalind bought a handful of daffodils, and as she looked at them she recalled her childhood's vision of a garden of her own. All that morning she found her thoughts wandering back to the stories her mother had told her of woodland paths and singing brooks; and before she left the office that afternoon she was asking herself why she could not sometime have a little house "somewhere in the country." On her way home that night she purchased a number of magazines devoted, as their title pages affirmed to "home and garden lovers," and in the evening pored over their pages with eager interest. Yes, there were just such places as she had imagined: houses with wide porches, and grass walks, and blossoming gardens. Rosalind resolved to save more carefully than ever before; and meanwhile to endeavor to discover a house and garden that she could hope some day to possess.

Amy Dill coming into Rosalind's room a few evenings later, found her absorbed in a story entitled "Spinster's Farm," which described with a certain convincing art the possibilities of living in comfort and happiness on a lonely farm. Amy wondered what had happened to "brighten Rose up"; for Rosalind, for the first time for many weeks, seemed eager to talk; and pointed out the clever illustrations in the book, showing flourishing gardens and vine-covered porches.

Amy was quite ready to listen; she had news for Rosalind; and was encouraged by her friend's unusual cheerfulness. Amy was going to be married the following month; she didn't suppose Rosalind would be much surprised, she said, because of course she wouldn't have been going about with Herbert all this time if they hadn't been engaged. And now Herbert's salary had been raised, and they could be married right away. They would live in some nearby suburb, she told Rosalind, where Herbert could have a garden: "Herbert was crazy about gardens," she concluded smilingly.

Rosalind endeavored to show a proper interest in Amy's news; but she realized, with a little shamed sense of some lack or failure in herself, that she would not miss Amy; that her going would, in a certain way, bring a feeling of freedom.

"I wish you were going to be married, Rosalind,"

said Amy, as she paused a moment at the door; feeling that her own happiness ought in some way to bring happiness to her friend.

"Small chance for me, Amy. I don't know any men," she responded smilingly.

"Well, that's your own fault, Rose," Amy replied seriously. "You don't show any interest in gentlemen. Why, even Herbert says that you are the most 'stand-off' girl he ever met."

Rosalind made some laughing response; but she wondered why her manner repelled her associates. She recalled suddenly that Miss Madden no longer seemed interested in her; but put the matter out of her thoughts with the conclusion that it did not matter very much.

The new interest in gardens continued to absorb her. She read with vivid interest various books telling of women who had purchased "abandoned farms" and, with almost unbelievable ease and happiness, earned a competence.

Amy was married and departed to the suburban home, and her room was taken by an elderly French woman, Madame Ress. The new lodger and Rosalind met now and then on the stairs or at the door; and Madame's pleasant smile and friendly greeting gave Rosalind an unexpected pleasure. Gradually a friendly acquaintance was established between the friendly woman and the solitary girl; and it

was not many weeks before Rosalind found herself confiding to this new friend her great desire to earn a much larger salary than she was at present receiving.

Madame expressed her interest; but ventured to ask why Rosalind required large sums of money. "You dress so neatly, you have no dependents, and you have told me that each month you put money in the savings bank; pardon me, but why do you so wish a larger income?"

It was an April evening, and the two were in Madame's room; Rosalind had brought her work, a bit of necessary mending, and Madame's look rested approvingly upon her guest. She admired the girl's smooth black hair, her steady grey eyes, and the dimple in the firm chin. She approved of the simple well-made gown, the carefully manicured hands, and the neatly polished shoes. It was a pity, thought the woman whose own life had been lived so fully, that this girl's days should go on like those of an elderly recluse.

Rosalind looked up from her work smilingly. "I'll tell you why I want to earn more, lots more," she responded. "I want a house of my own, and a garden. A garden with a singing brook; where lilacs grow near the front door, and where rose bushes flourish."

Madame lifted her hands in a little graceful gesture

of amazement. "But of course," she responded. "And when you marry, then without a doubt, your excellent desire will be accomplished."

"Small chance," declared Rosalind, "Why, I don't know any young men."

"It is not always the young men who have the house and the desired garden," replied Madame, with a delicate emphasis. Then she predicted boldly that Rosalind was sure to make a marriage of happiness, of splendor!

But the girl assured her gravely that she was mistaken. "All I can hope for is to earn a good salary, save money, and some day buy a small house, or perhaps an abandoned farm. But to earn more I must know more," she concluded.

"Truly you think wisely as to that," Madame assured her. "Perhaps, if you wish to improve your knowledge of French —" Madame hesitated questioningly.

Rosalind accepted the suggestion eagerly. She told Madame of Mr. Frisbie's opinion as to her increased value to the firm when she could use the French language with authority; and that such a knowledge would mean a certain increase in her salary.

"Then let us begin instantly. The present is the best time, always," said Madame.

This little exchange of confidence between the

two women proved the beginning of new interests and unexpected pleasure for Rosalind. Each evening with her grammar, and the carefully written exercises that Madame demanded, Rosalind spent an hour with the kindly little Frenchwoman. The girl soon realized that she was learning something of greater value than even French verbs. She could but notice the simple grace of her friend's daily life; her genuine desire to please; the exquisite neatness of her personal belongings. All these Rose appreciated and valued, and almost unconsciously imitated. She began to modulate her voice to smoother and more even notes; and now and then before the narrow mirror in her own room, she would imitate Madame's graceful bow. Rosalind acquired a new daintiness and grace in her simple garments which Madame, alert and keen-eyed, did not fail to notice and approve.

As the weeks went on Rosalind became conscious that she was happier than she had ever been. Madame Ress was interested in all that Rose had to tell her of her daily life. Often on returning from her day's work she would find that Madame had prepared a simple meal for them both in her pleasant room. The round table was drawn near the open window and spread with a white cloth; the excellent rolls, from a downtown restaurant whose French chef was known to Madame, the salad, the fruit

and fragrant coffee, seemed a feast to the tired girl.

Madame Ress was to go away early in July for the summer months. "But early in September I shall return and I shall return gladly this year because I return to a friend," Madame said with her charming smile. "But nevertheless, I enjoy the beautiful summer with Mademoiselle Mason."

Rosalind had never seen Miss Beryl Mason, the pupil who had engaged Madame's services as a companion for the summer. She knew that Miss Mason's father was a man of great wealth; that his summer home was at Bar Harbor, and that Beryl was beautiful. Madame declared her to be a kind and generous-hearted girl. It was Madame Ress's second summer with Miss Mason, and Rosalind always listened eagerly to whatever Madame might say of her. "She is like a girl in a story," declared Rosalind. "Why, she has everything."

"That is true," agreed Madame, "but I fear that she is not always to be so happy. The young gentleman to whom she is betrothed! Ah! He is so solemn; so — well, perhaps so small minded? Yes. He thinks of himself without ceasing. I do not think he will be a joyous companion," and Madame shook her head and sighed.

Rosalind's two weeks' vacation that year came early in July, and she and Madame left the Pem-

broke street house on the same day. Rosalind was going to a farm in Maine. "I'll write you all about it," she promised as she bade her friend good-bye.

Madame Ress' affectionate glance enfolded Rosalind. She noted with a new appreciation the clear grey eyes, and the look of energy and vigor in the girl's tall slender figure.

"And I will write to you, my dear child. I will tell you of all my grandeur," responded Madame laughingly. "And if you find your house with the orchard and the garden, why you will write me about that."

"Indeed I will," Rose answered laughingly. "And who knows?"

Who knows indeed what may befall at a journey's end?



## CHAPTER TWO

IT was late in the afternoon when Rosalind reached the farmhouse where she had engaged board. The fragrance of a honeysuckle, clambering over a low brown porch, greeted her. And when Mrs. Spencer opened the door and smiled upon her, Rosalind was sure that her vacation would be a pleasant one.

Mrs. Spencer led the way up the narrow stairs to a small, neat room.

"I do hope you'll like it here," she said a little anxiously. "There's pleasant walks all about."

"I'm sure that I shall have a beautiful time," Rosalind responded, her thoughts full of the fragrant air, and of the sunset glimmer over distant pine trees. "I mean to go for a walk right after supper."

A sudden friendliness shone in the woman's dull eyes. "I guess you're the kind that's pretty sure to find pleasant things wherever you go. Supper'll be all ready when you come down."

Rosalind slipped off her serge skirt and linen waist, and put on a cool gown of grey muslin. As she brushed her hair, and made ready to go down

she wondered if there were other boarders, and thought of dear Madame, sailing away toward Bar Harbor in the Masons' steam yacht.

In a way this was Rosalind's first real vacation. The previous year she had gone with Amy Dill to Winthrop Beach for the two weeks allowed her. The diversions which Amy enjoyed had not amused Rosalind; but she had enjoyed the morning dip in the salt water, the glory of the summer skies at night, and the freedom from the noise and heat of the city. It had been Madame Ress' suggestion that Rosalind should go to Mrs. Spencer's, and Rosalind felt it to be a great adventure. She was eager to be out in the summer twilight. The future began to seem full of enticing possibilities. She came into the dining room smiling, and the two stolid middle-aged people, whom Mrs. Spencer introduced as Mr. and Mrs. Leland, unconsciously smiled in response. Rosalind ate her supper happily. How good the hot biscuit tasted, and the honey. And was it possible that cold chicken and baked potatoes were ever before so exactly right? She finished before the others, and went out to the porch.

"I always knew that there were places like this," she said aloud, as she walked across the yard and followed a footpath which led up the slope back of the house. From the top she faced the radiance

of the sunset skies. As Rosalind looked across the fields she saw here and there the neat farm-houses shaded by tall elms and maples, the prosperous barns and well-tilled fields. The fading light rested vividly for a brief moment upon a grey roof in the distance, nearly hidden by close growing trees. Rosalind wondered about it as the light faded and she could no longer distinguish its shadowy outlines.

Rosalind lingered until Mr. and Mrs. Leland, urged by Mrs. Spencer's anxious fears that the newcomer had lost her way, came climbing up the slope. Rosalind was quite ready to return to the farmhouse with her new acquaintances. As they walked on together she spoke of the far-off grey roof and its sheltering trees.

"That must be the old Wright place," said Mrs. Leland. "It's over near the river. But it's nothing worth going to see. Nobody has lived in it for years."

But Rosalind promised herself that she would take her first real walk to the old house. She thought about it after she had said good-night to her companions, and had gone to her room. She wondered if the deserted house had a garden and an orchard, and if the river was near. "Who knows?" she again questioned happily, as she prepared for bed.

There were showers in the night, and Rosalind

awoke to a fresh and fragrant world, and was eager to be out in it. She was down stairs at such an early hour that she breakfasted alone, and then started for a walk, saying nothing to Mrs. Spencer of her intention to visit the old Wright house.

Mrs. Spencer followed her to the porch, and stood looking after her until a turn in the road hid Rosalind from sight. "She's a nice girl if ever I saw one," she declared aloud. "And neat! My! she's as spick and span as a new pin." And, tightening the broad strings of her apron about her stout waist, Mrs. Spencer went smilingly back to the hot kitchen where she spent the greater part of the long summer days.

For a time Rosalind walked slowly, enjoying the unaccustomed sense of freedom, and noticing all the beauty of the flowering roadside; the thick growing masses of lilac bushes in an old cellar, and the waving grass in the near-by fields. After following the main road for a time she turned into a lane that promised more shade and coolness, and where the tall elms gave delicate tracteries of leaf and branch across the road. It was evidently but little traveled, for here and there the grass nearly covered the wheel-tracks. "I am sure this road leads to the old house," thought Rosalind, with a little thrill of possible adventure near at hand.

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She was a little tired, however, when she first caught a glimpse of the grey roof, nearly hidden by the closely growing trees. "There it is!" she exclaimed aloud, and then laughed at her own eagerness.

"If any one could see me they would think I was returning to my ancestral home," she thought.

There was a hedge of thorny acacias close to the grass-grown track into which the road had dwindled. Rosalind endeavored to find an opening in the hedge through which she could enter the shut-in garden space; but the hedge was impenetrable. She followed it along to where it ended in a crumbling stone wall; and here, with some little difficulty, she managed to clamber into the enclosure. She pushed resolutely on through a tangle of vines and rose-bushes and at last found herself standing in front of a square, grey shingled house, half hidden by jasmine and honeysuckle. A flock of young robins flew up from the branches of a lilac tree. She pushed aside shrubs and vines until she reached a little open space near a side door to the house, and with a little tired sigh of satisfaction, sat down on the broad step.

As she rested there, breathing in the delight of her discovery, she became conscious of a little rippling sound. "It's a brook! I know it's a brook!" she whispered; and tip-toed in the direction

of the sound, as if afraid that at her step it might cease and vanish beyond recall. Beyond a tangled growth of currant bushes she came to a smooth grassy slope leading down to the singing brook.

"I never dreamed how beautiful a garden really was," she whispered, kneeling on the grassy bank beside the clear-flowing water. And then she noticed dim blue masses of forget-me-nots, half-covered by the overhanging grasses. She leaned forward and gently lifted up a cluster, and looked at them lovingly, but she did not pick them.

"This is the most heavenly place," she said softly, as she rose to her feet and looked back toward the house. "To think of any one owning this place and not living in it! It's wicked." She wondered what the rooms would be like, and wished that it were possible to get in. She walked to the front of the house and tugged at the heavy shutters, but they were securely fastened. The blinds to the upper windows were open, and Rosalind wondered if it would not be possible to climb to the roof of the porch and open a window. Suddenly she resolved to possess the house. "I'll make believe that it is my house and garden. Nobody will ever know it, and it will be something to remember. I'll begin now." She was standing directly in front of the porch door when she made this decision, and with a happy laugh she made a graceful curtsy

to the house, saying: "You are no longer a deserted and uncared-for house. You are mine. And every day of my vacation I am coming here and stay all day; and, if I can ever buy you, I will sometime live here."

Rosalind was late for the noonday meal, and Mrs. Spencer exclaimed in grieved surprise at her soiled white skirt and muddy shoes.

"Wherever have you been?" she asked, "And to think you started off so well starched."

Rosalind laughed, but she made no direct reply to the question. She had determined not to tell of her discovery, for the possibility that the Lelands might suggest accompanying her on a visit to the wonderful house made her cautious.

"I was on an exploring expedition, you know," she said, "I mean to be out of doors every minute. I am going off again this afternoon."

"Well, ain't you got an old skirt to wear?" suggested Mrs. Spencer. "It's dreadful hard to get washing done 'round here."

Rosalind had an old skirt, and agreed with Mrs. Spencer that it would be wise not to wear a white dress when she started off on her excursions. She did not venture to ask any questions about the Wright place, fearing that she might betray her visit.

After dinner she wrote a short note to Madame,

telling her of her delight in her new surroundings, but not even to Madame did Rosalind mention "the house with a garden." The post office was in the opposite direction from her morning's walk. It occupied a corner of a small general store, and here Rosalind purchased a trowel, a pair of pruning shears and clumsy, leather gloves. She looked about the store wondering at the miscellaneous array of merchandise.

"You have everything, haven't you!" she said admiringly.

The tall, thin youth who was tying up her purchases nodded gravely. "Most everything, but we're out of pianos just now."

"Do you really —" began Rosalind, and then, comprehending that this was his standard joke reserved for "summer folks," she smiled appreciatively. The grave young man permitted himself a little grimace in response.

"Some sense to that girl," he remarked aloud, as he watched Rosalind walk swiftly down the road. "She must be one of Mrs. Spencer's boarders."

Rosalind found that it was now the middle of the afternoon, too late to make it worth while to return to "her" house. She carried her package to her room, and was glad not to encounter any member of the household who might cheerfully question her



as to her purchases. She resolved to get an early start the next morning, to take a lunch, and stay all day. There was so much to be done in that garden, and she was eager to begin.

Mrs. Spencer was just starting the kitchen fire the next morning when Rosalind appeared.

"My land! You up already? Why, it ain't six o'clock!" she exclaimed.

"I know it, but it has been daylight for hours, I couldn't stay in bed. I'll help you get breakfast. Lets you and I have ours right here on the kitchen table," responded Rosalind.

"If you don't beat all!" said the pleased woman, "I never had a boarder before who wanted to eat with me. What say to poached eggs?"

"Splendid!" replied the girl, "and let me make the toast. "Mrs. Spencer, I want to take a lunch with me when I start off this morning, and stay all day; can I?"

"I don't know any reason why not. I'm always planning to get off that way after the boarders leave. But land! soon as they go there's pickling and preserving and fall cleaning staring me in the face, an' before I know it winter's set in," and with a little sigh for lost opportunities, Mrs. Spencer tightened her apron strings, and spread a snow white cloth over the table.

Each morning after this Rosalind breakfasted in

the pleasant kitchen, and with a box of lunch under her arm, was well on her way to the old garden before the Lelands were up. If they commented and wondered about Miss Allan's manner of enjoying her vacation the girl never knew it, and would not have been troubled thereby if she had. Day after day she dug about the currant bushes, cut off the dead wood of the rose-trees and honeysuckle; and, acquiring a sickle, cut a pathway around the house. On the second day she climbed the porch by the aid of the stout twisted vines, and entered the house from the window with but little difficulty. "Fastening all those lower windows with locks and bars, and leaving a window over a porch unfastened," she thought a little scornfully, and decided that no one who cared for the place had seen to its protection.

She went through the long closed rooms, opening windows as she went. There were two large front rooms, and from these opened two smaller chambers; behind these there was a small entry-way from which the back stairs led to the kitchen. A large room opened from the entry. "This room must be over the kitchen," Rose decided.

"I could move in any minute," she thought, looking at the high-posted bedsteads, the rush-seated chairs and slender-legged tables. It was evident that none of the furnishings of the old house

had been removed. Rosalind went down the backstairs and groped about in the shadowy kitchen. She unfastened the shutters, and turned toward the door. In the lock was a key, but try as she would, it seemed to Rosalind that it would never turn. With butter from her well-spread sandwiches she oiled the lock, and at last her efforts were rewarded, the key moved in response to her vigorous push, and she opened the door.

"There's everything I want here. Everything," she said softly, as she stood in the doorway looking across the garden and listening for the faint music of the brook.

Rosalind worked indoors as well as out. There were brooms and dusters in the kitchen closet, and before the end of the first week the rooms looked as if they were but waiting for a tenant. The key to the side door became her greatest treasure. At the beginning of the second week, on a dull, chilly morning when Mrs. Spencer had vainly urged her to stay at home, Rosalind had ventured to start a little fire in the big fireplace of one of the front rooms of the old house. There were tall, narrow book-cases in this room, and straight-backed chairs with cushioned seats, and a wide, comfortable settle near the fire. The book-cases were filled, and Jane Austen's novels were among the books. Lounging on the big sofa with "Sense and Sensi-

bility," Rosalind was sure that she need envy no one; not even the fortunate Beryl Mason. She needed the day of rest, and almost dreaded to extinguish the fire when the shadows of late afternoon warned her that she must start for home.

"I can't go back to Boston, I can't!" she thought, when only two more days of her vacation remained. "I will write to the firm and ask for two more weeks, and I will move into my own house."

She telegraphed her request that very day, "answer prepaid," and received a prompt consent. The firm knew as little of where Rosalind came from, or where her time was passed out of office hours, as they knew of the private life of the Emperor of China. What they did know was that she was an efficient and accurate stenographer; that she had never before asked a favor, and that she could easily be spared for the time she asked.

Rosalind made all her preparations carefully for an undiscovered occupation of the Wright house. On one day she purchased tea, coffee, and sugar from the youth at the general store. The next day she walked in the opposite direction, toward the station of River Junction, and in another small store she added sardines, bacon, crackers and matches to her supplies. She knew that she could get eggs and vegetables from a farm beyond the old house, and too far from Mrs. Spencer's to make a discovery

probable. She resolved to say, if she was found out, that she had hired the house. "I have earned the right to stay there by my work," she assured her questioning conscience.

Her plans worked out favorably. On the morning set for her departure from Mrs. Spencer's her trunk was carried to the Riverdale depot, and Rosalind, bag in hand, and dressed in her neat traveling suit, bade Mrs. Spencer and the Lelands good-bye. She would walk to the station, she said. There was plenty of time, and she would rather walk. "I've had a beautiful time," she assured Mrs. Spencer,

"Well then, you come again. I shall miss you considerable," responded Mrs. Spencer, evidently near to tears. The Lelands smiled amiably, and said good-bye without much interest or regret. They had decided that Miss Allan was "queer." Mr. Leland, who came from the middle west, recalled the fact that he had always heard that Boston women were peculiar; and Mrs. Leland confided to Mrs. Spencer that she doubted, yes, she doubted very much, if Miss Allan would ever marry. Mrs. Leland declared that it was plain to see that Rosalind was not really feminine in her tastes.

Rosalind was safe in "her own house" before the morning train stopped at Riverdale. She hung the neat travelling dress in the empty closet of the chamber over the kitchen. Her best shoes, carefully

stuffed with paper, stood sedately in one corner, and again clad in the old skirt, shoes, and the worn blue blouse, she made a tour of the house and garden.

“It will be heavenly to sit on the front porch and watch the stars,” she thought happily. She had always been so much alone that she felt no need of companionship, beyond a vague wish that Madame Ress might share the delight. In some of the books in the tall cases Rosalind had noticed the name of “Francis Wright” written, and in books of a later date “Elizabeth Wright.” But, not daring to question Mrs. Spencer, she knew nothing of the history of the house, of the reason for its desertion, or the name of its present owner. She said to herself that she did not want to know.

That day she prepared her luncheon in the old kitchen, bringing the few necessary dishes from the big pantry and spreading the kitchen table as carefully as if expecting a guest. The windows were wide open to the fragrance and sweetness of the midsummer air. In the afternoon she was back at the endless task of trying to bring some semblance of order to the old garden. She was more tired that night than on the previous days, and did not linger to watch the summer stars. From a high chest of drawers she drew yellowed sheets and spread the bed. A cedar chest in one of the front

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rooms was well-filled with worn blankets, and Rosalind carried one of these to her room.

“I never was so happy,” she whispered to herself, as she curled down in the wide bed. “This really seems as if it was my very own house.”

## CHAPTER THREE

“IT was your nonsense about building airships that influenced Father to make his will this way,” Walter Peters explained to his younger brother, after the lawyer had read them their father’s will, and had left them together in the book-lined room of the old Beacon street house.

Wright moved uneasily in his chair near the library window which overlooked the Charles River embankment. He said to himself that he didn’t care a hang about the will. He wished that Walter would stop talking. All Wright could think of was Death. That everybody must die. What was the use of trying to do anything?

“You know I told you,” went on Walter relentlessly, “but you wouldn’t listen; and now you see the fix you’re in. You’re only twenty-four, and you can’t touch a cent of the property, interest or principal, until you are thirty. Six years. And if you borrow any money in that time you lose all rights in the estate. Of course you can try to break the will?”



"I shan't do that," answered the younger man sharply.

"I didn't suppose you would. As you know, Father has given me this house outright, and of course you can stay on here just as usual; until you make your plans." Walter looked at his brother a little questioningly, as if expecting some word of appreciation of his offer.

"Thanks. You know I have a house of my own," responded Wright, "a house and twenty acres of land."

Walter looked puzzled for a moment. "Oh, that old shack that Grandfather Wright left you? I'd forgotten all about that," he said, and chuckled with amusement. "I guess you had better hunt up a job with some of those airship friends of yours, hadn't you?"

"Perhaps, later on. But I am going to take a look at the old house first," said Wright.

"Well, good luck. Sorry I can't offer you a loan," and Walter sauntered out.

Wright rose and stood looking out of the window. He could see people strolling along the embankment, or lounging on the seats, trying to find a little coolness and comfort after the heat of the midsummer day. He remembered suddenly that he had been sitting in his father's favorite chair. He recalled how often he had entered that room to be frowned

upon, disapproved of, and denied whatever he had most desired. And even now his father had denied him.

The sunset glow was fading from the western sky, and the lamps of the Harvard bridge made a shining necklace across the river. The figures along the esplanade became dull shadows before he turned from the window and switched on the light over the library table. For a moment he stood looking about the room as if he had never seen it before. Then he turned to the book-cases. Here and there he took a book from the shelves and piled them upon the table. When he finished there were perhaps a dozen volumes. Going to a closet at the far end of the room he returned with a ball of heavy twine, and tied the books into a compact package; carrying this he left the room, and made his way to the top floor of the house.

Wright's own room was a bare-looking chamber. A large table filled the bay window. On this were various wing-shaped bits of metal, and small boat-like objects. In one corner of the room, suspended from a hook in the ceiling, swayed a queer object; the model of an airship. There was a desk, with a litter of heavy drawing-paper. At the back of the room stood a narrow camp-like bed, and a chest of drawers.

The happiest hours of Wright Peters' boyhood

were associated with this room. He recalled his twelfth birthday, when he had implored his mother to give him this high upper chamber for his own. He remembered her smiling consent, and his father's sneering amusement. His mother had died that year. A sketch-like portrait of her in water-color hung over Wright's desk.

From a deep closet at the end of the room Wright drew out a packing case, a trunk and a well-worn leather bag. "Might as well pack now, and get off in the morning," he decided. He took down his mother's picture. How well she had loved him, he recalled gratefully. "I don't believe she had a very good time," he thought resentfully, as he looked at the shadowy, wistful face.

Before midnight his belongings were packed. When he came down stairs the next morning Walter had left the house. The elder brother was already in control of all his father's interests. Wright ate his breakfast alone, scribbled a word of good-bye to Walter, and detaching a latch-key from his key-ring, left it with the note on the hall table.

"Jane," he said to the clumsy maid who had served his breakfast, and now answered his ring, "the express will call for the packing-case, trunk and bag which are in my room."

"Yis sor," she responded vaguely.

This was Wright Peters' farewell to the old

house, built by his great-grandfather, and in which Wright could now claim no share or right. He did not look back. He said to himself that it had never been much of a home to him.

As he left the house he turned down a side street leading to the river, looking at his watch as he went. "Only eleven. There's a Portland train at one," he thought. He stopped suddenly, and thrust his hands into his pockets. There was a pleasant jingle of silver as he counted the loose coin. "Over a dollar, and I must have a bill or two in my pocket-book," reflected the young man. He discovered that his bill-book held two new five dollar notes, and, confident that his fare to River Junction would not take over one of these, he resolved to send Beryl Mason a farewell gift. He turned back, and walked leisurely across the Public Garden to the confectioner's, where three of his eleven dollars were invested in a box of Beryl's favorite sweets, to be sent to her at Bar Harbor.

"She'll think that Walter sent 'em and he won't deny it," thought Wright with a little chuckle, as if he had in some way triumphed over his brother. But he wondered, as he so often did, how Beryl had happened to fall in love with Walter. "She had much better have waited for me," he reflected, a little resentfully, knowing all the time that they were too good friends, too nearly brother and sister,

for any deeper sentiment to be possible between them.

He reached the station with time to spare before his train started, and he was reassured to find that his ticket would cost him but three dollars. "That leaves me five dollars to go on with," he said, to the evident amusement of the ticket clerk.

"He doesn't realize that I am on my way to my estate," Wright thought with a little smile, as he made his way to the train.

During the journey he tried to recall some definite idea of his grandfather's home. He knew that his mother had taken him there one far-off summer, when he was a very little boy. "I remember a brook, where I sailed paper boats," he said to himself, as the train sped on through ugly towns and across beautiful stretches of marshland. "And I know there was a garden and a long shed. I can use that shed, if it's still standing." Then his thoughts centered about the airship he meant to build, and for the rest of his journey he forgot that he was nearly penniless, with no resources, except a house which had not been occupied for years.

It was nearly dusk when the train reached River Junction. As Wright walked down the platform of the little station he noticed that his luggage was being carefully examined by a thin, elderly man and a stout clumsy boy.

"I reckon these belong to you, young feller?" questioned the man, peering at Wright over his spectacles.

"I expect they do," answered Wright. "Can I leave them here until tomorrow?"

The old man and the boy exchanged glances.

"Yes, you can leave 'em," came the slow response.

"Can you tell me how to reach the old Wright place?" asked Wright.

"There ain't nobody living there, and ain't for years," answered the man, wondering if this good-looking young man might not be a fugitive from justice, such as he often read about as being discovered by clever men in dull villages. He resolved to answer all questions with due caution, but his hopeful drama came to a sudden end with Wright's declaration.

"Well, I am going to live there. I am Wright Peters."

The stout boy's mouth opened wider than before, and he edged a little further away from where Wright was standing. Only last night he had witnessed a moving-picture show in the Town Hall, showing a counterfeiter arriving at a small village and installing himself in a deserted house. Orrin was quick to notice a strong resemblance between Wright and the counterfeiter.

But not so Mr. Ezra Holden, station agent at

River Junction. The name "Peters" sang in his ears. Richard Peters and his great wealth, his romantic marriage with Elizabeth Wright, and his recent death, was a story well-known to Mr. Holden. And now here was Young Peters coming to take a look at his Grandfather Wright's old place! Mr. Holden began to see golden days in store for the residents of the town. Probably this young chap didn't know the value of money. Of course he would launch right out repairing the old house, buy horses and cows—But Mr. Holden's happy musings were interrupted by a sharp question: "Can you tell me the way?"

"Land! Mr. Peters, you must excuse me," began Mr. Holden, "my mind clean left me when you said you were Richard Peters' son. I used to know your ma, and —"

But again Mr. Holden was interrupted, this time by Orrin!

"Say, I'll tell you where your house is. You see that meeting-house over there?" Wright nodded. "Well, you take that road to the right, and follow it. The old Wright House is clear down; there's a lane leads up to it; and you can just see the roof. It's pretty near covered up with bushes and trees." Orrin swallowed hard as he finished these directions. He didn't believe this young man was a Peters, and he hoped he would

prove at least an imposter. Orrin reflected a little bitterly that nothing ever happened at River Junction.

"Thank you. I'll come up for my things tomorrow," and before Mr. Holden could tell him that his house would not be a fit place for a Peters to spend even one night, Wright had left the platform.

"Well, Orrin Jennison! You're about old enough to know better than to break right into conversation," grumbled Mr. Holden. "You jest turn to and put those things in the baggage-room. I ought to go straight after him and show him the way to the hotel. He can't stay in that old place."

As Wright left the depot he found himself facing a store, in whose window were displayed a bag of corn, a roll of checked gingham, a box of striped candy and a pile of shining tinware.

"The place to buy food," he decided, and entered. Behind the counter stood a tall, middle-aged woman dressed in gingham, evidently from the roll which he had noticed in the window. Her dull brown hair was drawn tightly back from her forehead, and her small brown eyes rested upon him with obvious curiosity.

"Can I get some things to eat here? Crackers, butter, sugar? What do I want to camp out?" he asked, taking off his soft hat, and smiling in as



friendly a fashion as if he were greeting an old acquaintance.

"Well," came the response, in a pleasant but slightly nasal tone, "if I was you, I'd get a couple of tins of sardines, and some crackers, sugar, butter, and a tin of condensed milk."

Wright nodded approvingly. "That sounds all right. Divide a dollar among those things, please." The woman hunted up a lead pencil and figured carefully on a piece of brown wrapping paper. Then she turned to the shelves, and in a short time Wright was handed an ungainly package.

"You weren't lookin' for no mail, were you?" she questioned, as Wright paid for his purchases.

"Not tonight," he answered pleasantly, and with a friendly "good-night," the door closed behind him.

The woman hurried to the window and peered out between the roll of gingham and the tinware. "I'd like to know who he is and where he's bound for," she thought eagerly. For but few strangers entered the little shop, and Mrs. Bent, like Orrin, often wished that something of interest would occur.

Wright turned down the road by the Meeting House, as Orrin had directed. There was a reflection of the late sunset along the distant horizon. Tall feathery grasses by the roadside seemed dusted by bits of silver. The air came fresh and sweet from the fields and distant pines, and Wright

breathed it in gratefully. He walked quickly, eager to get a sight of the only place he could call home.

The summer dusk was thick about him when he reached a tall hedge which seemed to shut in a wilderness of trees and shrubs. He could but vaguely distinguish the outlines of a roof.

"This must be the place. Wonder how I get in?" He groped his way along the thorny hedge until he reached a crumbling wall over which he climbed with great caution. He found himself in a tangle of vines and prickly shrubs, through which he pushed resolutely, and suddenly he realized that he was in a smooth path, and directly in front of him was the house. The fragrance of roses and honeysuckle filled the night air with a heavy sweetness. He heard the ripple of running water. "That's the brook," he thought, with a little thrill of remembrance of far-off joys.

He groped his way toward the shadowy house, and became conscious that this old garden was not a neglected uncared-for place. The grass path had evidently been recently cut. He followed it toward the rear of the house, more puzzled at every step. This must be his grandfather's house. He was sure that it had stood unoccupied for years. In his pocket was the key to the front door. Yet it must be that some one was living here, in spite of Mr. Holden's statement to the contrary. He

turned the corner of the main house and for a moment stood in utter surprise. There, directly in front of him, from an open kitchen window shone a clear light. Very cautiously he moved nearer the door. He could see that the light came from a single candle, and the candle stood on a table neatly spread for one person. He could see a shining stove where a tea-kettle was sending up a slender spiral of steam. An appetizing odor came through the open door; and instantly Wright became conscious that he was hungry; too hungry to eat crackers and sardines when hot stews were simmering upon his own cookstove. Wright approached the open door boldly, and rapped. He looked into the vacant room, standing alert and ready to explain his presence, and to ask by whose authority his house was occupied. But the silence was unbroken, no one came to answer his knock.

"Something queer about this," Wright whispered, stepping over the threshold and laying his package of groceries on the table. Then he turned toward the stove; there was a brisk fire of wood. On the back stood a small covered kettle. Wright lifted the cover and sniffed appreciatively. "Chicken stew," he said softly. On the table was a crusty loaf of wheat bread, and a generous square of butter. A small earthenware teapot was on the hearth of the stove.

"Evidently supper is ready," he said aloud, and taking a bowl from the table he dished out a liberal portion of the stew. Then he seated himself at the table and began to eat. The crusty loaf appealed to him and he cut off a number of slices. He poured boiling water into the brown teapot, and, quite as he expected, found that the tea-leaves were waiting, and finished his meal with an excellent cup of tea.

Then he remembered gratefully that he had filled his cigarette case from his brother's box only that morning, and Walter was never miserly in regard to his own pleasures; they were good cigarettes. Wright lit one at the candle-flame, and leaned back with a sigh of satisfaction. At that moment a door facing the kitchen table opened, and a girl stood looking at him.

"Well!" she exclaimed.

Without another glance in his direction the young woman walked quickly toward the stove. Then she turned toward Wright.

"Couldn't you dish up a bowl of stew without spilling it all over a clean stove?" she asked sharply. Wright stood beside the table looking like a school-boy who had been discovered stealing jam.

"I — I didn't know that any one lived here," he began, then, as the young woman smiled scornfully, he added quickly, "and I was awfully hungry."

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"I see you were. You couldn't wait to ask. Now that you have helped yourself perhaps you'll go."

"But I don't know where to go I expected. — I thought —" Wright stammered and hesitated. He suddenly found it impossible to tell this young woman, whose grey eyes were regarding him so closely, that this house belonged to him, and that he intended to take possession of it.

"If you see fit to wander about the country you can't expect that people will take you in wherever you happen to find an open door," she said.

"I will pay for my supper," said Wright, picking up his hat. "That was a dandy stew," he added, venturing a little smile.

But there was no answering smile on the young woman's face. Wright noticed that her hair was black, and that there was a dimple in the firm chin.

"You are welcome to your supper," she replied; and Wright wondered if she was not really a little afraid, and at this thought he turned quickly toward the open door.

"Thank you very much," he said meekly, and taking his clumsy bundle he stepped out into the shadowy garden.

He followed the grass path to the front of the house, and again pushing through the tangle of shrubs, reached the road, where he stood for a

moment. Then he started back toward the railway station at a rapid pace.

The girl in the kitchen stood by the stove tense and listening. After the noise of her unwelcome visitor's steps had ceased she went to the open door. Her breath came quickly, and had there been an observer they would have realized that she was frightened. After what seemed to Rosalind a longer time than all of a sunny afternoon, she stepped back into the kitchen and closed and fastened the door.

"I ought to have known that some tramp was sure to find the way in. I don't know what to do. But I don't believe he knew that I was frightened," she thought. "And now I will have to clear up, and wash the dishes," and she turned toward the table. Something glimmered in the flickering light from the nearly burned-out candle. Wright had left his cigarette-case open beside his plate. The girl picked it up and turned it over curiously. She noted the monogram "W. P." in one corner. Unconsciously she drew a breath of relief. She took a cigarette and lit it at the candle flame. As she blew out a tiny circle of fragrant smoke she turned back toward the stove and announced to the now silent tea-kettle: "How silly to be frightened. The man was probably on a walking-tour, and happened in, and couldn't resist the chicken-stew," and she

smiled, remembering that he had declared it a "dandy," and recalling as well that he had stood very straight, and that his hair was brown. With a certain feeling of compassion, she remembered that her visitor had said that he did not know where to go.

She looked admiringly at the delicate chasing and tiny monogram of the silver case. She realized that her stay at the deserted house must end. "I must get away early in the morning," she resolved. Who could know but that this tall good-looking young man might not stop at Mrs. Spencer's and say that some one was living in the Wright house? He might even ask someone to call for the forgotten case. She would have to return to Boston in a few days, in any event; and she at once began her preparations to leave. Before she went to bed that night she had packed her bag, and she was up at sunrise the next morning. Every trace of her occupancy was carefully removed. She had long before discovered that the front door had a spring lock. So the kitchen door was again locked on the inside, and she closed the front door safely behind her long before the Riverdale station was open to would-be travelers on an early train to Boston.

"Thank you, kind house," she said aloud, as she looked back. "Perhaps some day I'll come back."

## CHAPTER FOUR

THE station agent was not surprised when Mr. Wright Peters returned, just before the station was closed for the night.

“Well, I reckoned you’d find too many bushes ’twixt your house and the road to make good traveling,” was Mr. Holden’s amiable greeting. “I wish ’twas so I could ask you to stop at my house, but my wife’s aunt is visiting us, and —” Before Mr. Holden could add to his perfectly good reasons for not entertaining Wright, the young man had interrupted him, “Oh, I’m sure there’s some place nearby where I can get put up.”

“Well, it’s kind of late, but maybe Mrs. Bent will take you in. She does put up folks sometimes, just to oblige. She keeps the postoffice.”

Wright welcomed the suggestion, and Mr. Holden promptly escorted him across the road to the back door of Mrs. Bent’s house, explaining as he went that the front of the house was a store and post office.

Mrs. Bent welcomed him a little doubtfully, looking sharply at the package of groceries which



he was still carrying, and which he had so recently purchased from her. But she accepted him as a lodger, and directed him to the neat upper chamber.

"Breakfast will be ready at seven," she informed him.

Wright had discovered the loss of his cigarette-case before he reached the station. He was sorry at the thought of losing it, for Beryl had given him the case on his last birthday. But he was quite sure he had left it on the kitchen table, and had already resolved to return to his house and discover who had taken possession of it. "That girl isn't living there alone, of course not," he decided. "And whoever they are I'll tell them I want the house." He resolved that he would be polite about it. Perhaps the girl's father would introduce him to the girl; and she would probably be amused, perhaps a little embarrassed, when she remembered how sharp she had been with him. With these pleasant thoughts Wright sank into the surprising depths of the big feather bed. He wondered at himself the next morning that he had not immediately asked Mr. Holden who had moved into the Wright house. But he decided that, as he had not spoken of it the previous evening, it would now be wiser to say nothing about the matter, and make his own investigations.

In spite of Mrs. Bent's careful announcement of

the breakfast hour, it was after eight o'clock when Wright appeared the next morning in the tiny dining-room.

"Will you be coming here for dinner?" she questioned, as she brought in a large dish of steaming oatmeal, a plate of hot rolls and a platter of ham and eggs.

Wright concluded hopefully that he would not require a noonday meal, and replied that he intended to stay at his own house and cook for himself.

"Sort of camp out for a spell?" she suggested.

"Why, yes, I suppose that will be about what it will come to," he responded smilingly.

Mrs. Bent was evidently reassured. She began to credit his story that he was a "Peters." City people seemed to enjoy queer things, she reflected, and smiled to herself at the folly of the rich in their pursuit of happiness.

When Wright crossed the road to the depot Mr. Holden, who had evidently been waiting for him, hurried down the platform to meet him.

"Can you lend me a wheelbarrow for an hour or two?" asked Wright, "I want to wheel my things down to the house."

Mr. Holden chuckled. Wasn't that just like a young feller with a pocket-full of money? he thought. Probably thought it was a great joke to push a wheelbarrow along a country road.

"Yes, sir, I can," he responded cordially. "Here, Orrin, you fetch the wheelbarrow right up to the baggageroom."

Orrin obeyed joyfully, and in a few minutes the case, bag, trunk and the package of groceries, were in the wheelbarrow and Wright was trundling it down the road by the church. Mr. Holden and Orrin watched him out of sight. As the whistle of the eleven o'clock train for Boston recalled them to their official duties, Orrin turned to his employer and said: "I don't believe that feller's got much money. No, sir, I don't!"

"Humph! What do you know about it? His father left 'nigh on to a million, and only two sons to share it. What do you know about money?"

"Don't have a chance to know much about it on two dollars a week," muttered Orrin, as he sauntered down the platform.

As Wright came in sight of the tall hedge he began to feel a little uncomfortable. Suppose these people in his house refused to acknowledge that he had a right to the house? Perhaps the girl's father, or it might be her husband, should scorn him, and tell him, as the girl had done on the previous night, to "move on."

"They'll find out that I mean to stay this time," Wright resolved valiantly.

He left the wheelbarrow at the end of the hedge.

"I'll get an ax and cut a way through this hedge," he decided, as he pushed through vines and bushes until he came to Rosalind's grass walk. He stood for a moment looking toward the house. The shutters were closed, it looked silent and deserted.

"I can't have dreamed all that about the girl and the chicken-stew, can I?" thought Wright, as he rapped vigorously on the kitchen door, and stood waiting for some sound from within. After a moment he walked around to the front of the house, trying the closely shuttered windows. At last he was convinced that the place was vacant.

"By Jove! If I don't find my cigarette-case on the kitchen table, I'll believe that I did dream the whole thing," he said aloud, as he drew the key to the front door from his pocket, and entered the house. He went straight to the kitchen. There was nothing on the table, nor was there any evident sign that the room had been recently in use.

"Well!" said Wright. At that moment the little wooden clock on the high mantel struck the hour.

Wright turned and faced the clock, removed his hat, and made a low bow. "Thank you for your assurance; I have always understood that Time would tell," he said aloud.

He went through the house opening the closed shutters, and rejoicing at the number of fireplaces.

From the windows of one of the front chambers he could look over the garden and the field beyond, and see the river. He decided that he would sleep in that room. He crossed the small entry and opened the door of the chamber over the kitchen. Apparently it was as unused and deserted as the rest of the house, but Wright stood as if waiting permission to enter. After a moment he closed the door, and went down the back stairs. He was quite sure that the room over the kitchen had been the chamber used by his unknown tenant. The long shed revealed an abundance of firewood, as well as garden tools. An ax, rusty and dull, was among these, and Wright was soon in the garden hacking away the masses of tangled vines and clearing a passageway for his wheelbarrow.

"Plenty to do here," he thought, as he carried his belongings into the house.

When the kitchen clock struck one, he realized that he must open his package and prepare himself something to eat. Again he searched vainly for the cigarette-case.

He wondered if he really had left it there, and at last with an exclamation of disappointment, decided to give it up as lost, and to think no more about it.

The dining-room, with its clumsy walnut table, would make just the room he wanted. He unpacked the case containing his model of an airship, charts

and books, and decided that the old house had been intended for exactly the work he meant to do.

The sketch of his mother he carried to the upper chamber, and rested it on the narrow mantel-shelf.

Then he returned to the garden, and looked about with amused and curious eyes. It was evident that some one had very recently weeded about the currant-bushes, and trimmed the rose-trees. "It was the girl, of course," he said to himself, as he followed a faint path through the grass to the little brook. "I wish I knew who she was, and how she came here," he thought.

By sunset Wright was so hungry that his supply of eatables were, with the exception of sugar and coffee, entirely finished, and as he sat on the porch steps that evening listening to the sleepy notes of a bird in a near-by tree, and conscious of the heavy fragrance of the garden, he realized that he had never worked so hard in his life. He was drowsy and tired; he wondered vaguely if he really could manage to get on for six years. "Too bad Father felt the way he did about aviation. I need that half million right now. But I shan't need it by the time it's due," he assured himself.

He groped his way up the shadowy stairs, and pulling open drawers and opening chests, he discovered the necessary sheets and blanket. From

his bed he could look through an open window and see a sky thick with stars. The only sound was a creeping honeysuckle vine, moved by a little breeze, tapping against the window-frame. Wright was too tired to lie long awake. He was not discouraged or unhappy, and the old house had seemed to welcome him; to promise security, and perhaps happiness.

"I declare to it you must be a hustler!" said Mr. Holden admiringly, as he stood beside Wright on the grass path the next morning. "You must have worked all night," he continued, looking about with a puzzled expression at the neat garden space, where Rosalind had worked so many happy hours. "I expect you had to shovel the dust out of the house."

"Come in," urged Wright smilingly. "You will see what a good housekeeper I am when you look at my kitchen stove."

Mr. Holden muttered an exclamation as he saw the well-polished stove, Rosalind's last task before she left the house.

"You do beat all!" he declared. "I wouldn't believe that it could have been done in the time you've been here. Well, I come over here on a little bit of business," and he looked at Wright sharply. "It's something I wrote to your father about over ten year ago; but he never answered

my letter. But, as I understand it, this place is yours. You can sell, rent or otherwise dispose of it as you see fit?"

"Why, yes, that is true," replied Wright, wondering what his visitor really wanted. "But I don't want to sell it," he added. "This is my home. I mean to live here."

"Live here?" echoed Mr. Holden incredulously. "Why, I reckoned you just came down to look around, and sort of camp out for a spell. But anyway, 'taint the house I want to buy. I wouldn't take it as a gift. But there's some meadow-land, t'other side of that brook, 'bout four acres of the best grassland in this township. I'd be willing to pay a fair price for that."

"Who has cut the grass in past years?" asked Wright, beginning to see a possible income from his inheritance.

"Mr. Griffith. His land meets it on the further side. Guess he had some sort of a deal with your father 'bout grass and apples and so on; and what he paid went to the taxes," explained Mr. Holden.

"I see. Has it been cut this season?" and Wright's voice had a note of eagerness.

"No, it's full time it was," replied Mr. Holden.

"Well, Mr. Holden, I'm sorry to disappoint you, but I don't believe I'll sell at present. If I change my mind I'll give you the first chance. I will let



Mr. Griffith know that I will cut the grass after this," said Wright.

Mr. Holden looked at Wright approvingly. "Well, you can't say no fairer than that," he said. "I s'pose you know that you've got some good pine timber here?"

Wright shook his head. "I don't know anything about the place, beyond the fact that there is about twenty acres," he replied.

"Then you'd better step along with me, and I'll show you as fine a growth of pine as there is in this county. It's worth three thousand dollars if it's worth a penny," said Mr. Holden. "Your Grandfather Wright set considerable by those pine trees."

Wright drew a long breath. Was it possible that "the old shack," as Walter had called it, was going to give him a chance to work out his invention, to prove his ideas, really to live? He wished that his grandfather could know how much his gift meant.

Mr. Holden led Wright through the garden and past the shed and the old shingled barn. They climbed a stone wall, and crossed a little strip of rough pasture-land, beyond which stood the tall pines.

"There! Look at 'em! Ain't that a handsome sight?" questioned Mr. Holden. "Now, I don't want to be interfering, but I know the wuth of good

pine timber, and there'll be folks enough who'll try to make you think this ain't wuth much. So, if you get an offer for it you let me know, and I'll tell you if it's a fair one." Mr. Holden said to himself that he wouldn't let young Peters be cheated, even if he was rich enough to buy up the whole township.

"Your Grandfather Wright, being a sea captain, didn't set any great value on land. All he cared for land was to see something growing on it," explained Mr. Holden. "Just look at all that land 'round the house! Over an acre, given over for a flower garden! When your ma was a girl she was always setting-out seeds and getting new plants. And your grandfather always helping her."

Mr. Holden led Wright around the woodlot through the meadow to the Griffith farm, and introduced him to Mr. Griffith; a stout, smiling old man, in faded blue shirt and over-alls. Mr. Griffith welcomed Wright warmly, and when Wright told him that he meant to live in the old house, the farmer declared it was the best news he could hear. Mr. Holden started back to his duties at the depot, and Mr. Griffith led the way toward the square white house, where Mrs. Griffith urged Wright to stay to dinner which she declared was nearly ready. Wright accepted gratefully. After dinner Mr. Griffith spoke about his arrangement with Wright's father in regard to whatever the old

place might yield. "I suppose now you'll look after things yourself. But if you want to sell your hay just as it stands, I'll give you fifty dollars for it," he said. Wright did want to sell the hay. He endeavored not to show how eagerly he welcomed the offer, and when he left the Griffith farm he was in much better spirits than he had been since coming to River Junction. Beside the fifty dollars, which Mr. Griffith had insisted on paying him, he had a loaf of excellent bread, a dozen fresh eggs, and a square of golden butter.

"I don't see how you're going to manage by yourself," Mrs. Griffith had said, "I tell you what, you let me make your bread. You can pay me same as that young woman did who camped out somewheres near here."

"Camped out?" questioned Wright, hoping that he might be on the trail of his mysterious tenant.

"Yes," replied Mrs. Griffith, but evidently had no further information to give.

As the summer days went on Wright found they were not long enough for all he wanted to accomplish. He had cleared out the shed, and with the help of a carpenter from the village had put in workbenches and a forge. In the short summer evenings he was busy over his drawings at the big table in the dining-room. He did not keep the house in the spotless condition in which he found it; but he did

not neglect to clean and polish the kitchen stove; recalling, as he industriously rubbed and polished, the girl's disapproval of his former carelessness. He sometimes wondered what the girl's name was. He decided that he must give her some sort of a name. It was silly to go on calling her "the girl." He repeated his favorite names aloud: "Lucia, Celia, Beryl." Of course her name wouldn't be Beryl. It should be "Rose," he determined, noticing the big white roses on the bush near the kitchen door. Henceforth in his thoughts the mysterious girl was Rose.

Before the summer was over Mr. Holden secured a purchaser for Wright's pine timber at even a larger price than Wright had dared to hope. Early in October five thousand dollars were deposited to Wright's credit, in payment, at a Portland bank. Wright had made sure that the young growth of trees would be spared and protected. Beyond the pines was a thick growth of birch trees, and the sale of these had added a fair sum to Wright's capital.

As the days grew shorter Wright decided that he must have a helper in his shop, and appealed to Mr. Holden to find him a boy who would work for small pay.

"You take Orrin. I don't have no use for him winters. He lives next house to the post-office, and

he'll be glad to earn a couple of dollars a week. I'll send him over," said Mr. Holden, and that afternoon Orrin, evidently eager to secure the chance, was engaged as a helper. Wright cautioned the boy to say as little as possible about their work.

"I am just fixing a flying-machine for my own amusement, understand?" he explained, "and I don't want you to let any person come into my shop when I am out of it. You can't ask any boy here. Remember that."

Orrin promised. To work with a man who had really been up in an aeroplane — who could make one — was such an adventure as Orrin would never have imagined possible. At first the boy was so clumsy in whatever he attempted that Wright was often tempted to send him home. But gradually, as he learned the use of tools, and watched Wright's clever hands, he woke up, and quickly responded to Wright's instructions. However early in the winter mornings Wright appeared in the shed he would find the forge fire glowing, his tools and materials in order, and Orrin busy over some task. The boy listened eagerly to Wright's every word. "Movies" at the village ceased to interest him. They seemed tame compared with the possibilities of his daily work.

Wright often asked the boy to share his mid-day meal, and offered him the loan of any book he

might want. Orrin's first selection was the story of an explorer's winter near the South Pole.

"If this fellow had taken an aeroplane along he might have accomplished more," Wright said, as he handed Orrin the book.

"Sure he would!" the boy declared earnestly.

The neighborhood excitement, which had naturally followed the arrival of "one of the Peters boys," had soon died away. Mr. Holden quickly realized that, for some unimaginable reason, this young man had been disinherited, and had promptly announced it as a fact. "It's not the boy's fault; you can depend on that," he would add, when the question was discussed in his hearing. "Richard Peters always was queer. Guess Elizabeth Wright wished herself back in her father's house more'n once, if the truth was known."

Wright's coming recalled the story of his mother's romance to many of the older people of the neighborhood. Some of them could remember the summer when young Richard Peters had been rescued from his overturned boat near the mouth of the river by Captain Wright, and taken to the Old Wright house. The young man's arm proved to have been broken, and he was ill from shock and exposure. He stayed on for weeks, and when he returned to Boston, Elizabeth Wright had promised to marry him.

"It was just like a story in a book," the older women declared, as they retold the tale of the young man's great wealth and of Elizabeth Wright's charm and beauty.

"The old Cap'n wasn't any too pleased, for all young Peters' good looks and money," they would sometimes add, and tell of the long months and years that elapsed between the daughter's visits to her father's house.

When Wright looked at the picture of his mother he often wondered why she had loved his father. He had heard people speak of their marriage as a true romance, and one day Mrs. Griffith told him the story of his father's first visit to the Wright house. She told it with a sentimental remembrance of the thrill and excitement it had been to her, when, as a young woman, she had watched, half-enviously, the two fortunate lovers as they sauntered down the elm-shaded lane or drove about the country roads in the basket-phaëton behind the fine horse, which young Peters had had sent from Boston. Mrs. Griffith's life had been happy; she often declared that her husband was the best man in all the world. She knew that she would not have exchanged her own life for that of any other woman; yet, even now, she was sure that Elizabeth Wright had known Romance, and that she, Ann Griffith, had missed it.

"If ever a marriage was meant to be 'twas Elizabeth Wright's to your Pa," she told Wright. "Just think, Cap'n Wright saved the young man's life, and fetched him home, and I've heard folks say that the minute your Pa saw Elizabeth he was in love with her."

Wright listened thoughtfully. Even as a young lad he had known that his mother was not happy. He knew, as he grew older, that his father was inconsiderate and selfish; that he had but little affection to give anyone. Wright wondered if marriages like his mother's, marriages of "love at first sight," romantic marriages, all turned out that way? The thought made him vaguely unhappy.

The Griffiths were his nearest neighbors. He purchased his supplies at River Junction, and had not visited the village in the opposite direction. He knew that the railway station was called Riverdale; and Orrin frequently went there on errands. The boy had suggested that if Wright got tired of preparing his own food that Mrs. Spencer would probably take him to board. "She lives in Riverdale, but 'taint much over a mile. I guess she's a fine cook," Orrin had said hopefully. But Wright was not tempted. With Mrs. Griffith's excellent bread, pies and the various dishes which she often brought, and with the food he could prepare for



himself, Wright had no wish to journey so far from home.

Wright, as Christmas time drew near, found himself uneasy, and his thoughts turned to his acquaintances and friends so constantly that he owned to himself that he needed a little human companionship. He did not think much about Walter, for the two brothers had never been companions. But he did think about Beryl, and how pleasant it would be to step into the Masons' big living-room, with its glowing fire and plain, comfortable furnishings. To hear all that she had been doing since they met, and sit with her on the broad window-seat and watch the sunset's last gleams across the Charles. He knew Beryl would be amused to hear about the mysterious tenant, and the excellent chicken stew. He determined to go to Boston. He told Orrin that he would be away a week; and Orrin promised, much as a young priest might make his vows, to guard and protect Wright's property until his return.

It was the early twilight of a December day when Wright reached Boston. He had no doubt of a welcome in his old home, but he had no wish to go there. He would, he decided, call on his brother at his office the next morning. He had never blamed Walter for their father's unjust will. He did not blame anyone. Things happened in a

certain way, Wright concluded, and it was no use to fuss about other people.

He put up at his club, and again thanked his grandfather that the old house enabled him to keep his membership. He enjoyed his excellent dinner, and decided he would go to the theatre. As he walked down the steps of the club that evening and turned down the street he drew a long breath of satisfaction. After all it was a good thing to come back to one's own town, he reflected happily. In the morning he would send Beryl the finest roses that he could purchase; in the afternoon he would see her. "She will ask me to Christmas dinner, and I'll go," he thought, light-heartedly. Not caring greatly what the play might be, he turned in at the nearest theatre, secured his seat, and then looked at his programme, and smiled: "'As You Like It.' Well, nothing can be better than this," he thought, leaning comfortably back, and prepared to enjoy his evening.

In the dim light he could only see that the seat next his own was occupied by an elderly woman. He heard her speak to the person beyond her in French, and was vaguely interested. Then the curtain rose on the orchard scene, with Orlando bemoaning his brother's unfairness, and for the course of the act Wright had no thought for his neighbor. As the applause ceased, the lights flared

up, and the buzz of voices filled the theatre, Wright glanced at the lady next him. She was speaking to her companion, a girl, to whom his eyes naturally turned.

The girl had seen and recognized him at once. But neither made the slightest sign of ever having met before.

"She is lovely," Wright discovered. Her eyes wavered from his, and rested upon her programme.

He heard her respond to her companion. They both spoke in French. He decided that they were mother and daughter. It was difficult for him to turn his glance away. He remembered the story of his father's romance, that he had loved Elizabeth Wright the moment he saw her.

"So this is what I came to Boston for," he thought. He was filled with a new and vivid excitement. He could no longer fix his mind upon the play. He dared not again look in her direction, fearing that it would displease her. He heard her companion's smooth voice speaking the name of the heroine of the play, "Rosalind," and wondered to himself what the girl's name really was. Suddenly he remembered his cigarette-case. Did this girl still keep it as a memento of her adventure? For Wright had long since decided that the girl had stayed alone in the old house, and that no one had discovered her occupancy.

"I'll find out where she lives," he determined. There must be some way of seeing her again. He would see her and speak to her. It seemed to him that the play would never drag itself through. It no longer charmed him. He wanted only the final act, that he might follow these people and discover the girl's home.

The curtain fell. Wright stepped into the aisle, and the two women passed out. He kept close behind them. He heard the girl say: "Madame," not her mother, evidently. They turned toward the subway, and Wright, close behind them, followed. Suddenly they disappeared. He looked this way and that; puzzled and confused. How had they escaped him? He came to his senses with a start. What was he doing? Trying to follow an unknown girl at midnight. At their first meeting she had taken him for a tramp. Perhaps she had noticed him, and was, at least, amused at his behavior. He muttered to himself that he did not care if she was; he meant to find her, sometime. How smoothly his father's and Walter's affairs, in love as well as in business, seemed to run, he thought a little resentfully, as he walked swiftly in the direction of his club. He passed little groups of happy people evidently bound toward their homes. Now and then a couple sauntered along apparently unconscious of the sharp wind which sent little eddies of

whirling snow across the pavement. For the first time in his life Wright felt that life had not been kind to him. Why was there no home for him? No warmth of affection? Why had the girl disappeared?

He looked up into the wintry sky, and thought of an old garden filled with summer fragrance, and of a dark-eyed girl at the kitchen door. His dark mood vanished, and a little smile crept over his face. "I'll find her," he vowed lightly. But later on as he entered his room he owned to himself with a returning sense of unhappiness, that there was small chance that he would ever again be as near to "Rose" as he had been that evening.

## CHAPTER FIVE

WHEN Rosalind Allan returned from her summer vacation at Riverdale a surprise awaited her at the Pembroke street lodging house. Mrs. Weevely opened the door and greeted her with an unaccustomed warmth.

"Well, you can't guess who is up-stairs waiting for you, Miss Allan," she announced smilingly.

"Oh! Madame Ress, of course," declared Rosalind with eager delight.

Mrs. Weevely shook her head, and the smile vanished.

"Somebody a great deal nearer to you than Mrs. Ress," she replied. Mrs. Weevely never permitted herself to refer to her lodger as "Madame." She had confided to the cook, after Madam Ress had engaged the room, that she could only hope that the new lodger wouldn't turn out to be a medium or a fortune teller; the frequent appearance of the Masons' car at her door reassured her in a measure; and gradually it was borne in upon her that the little elderly woman was a tenant of value. Never-

theless, "Madame" seemed a doubtful substitute for the English title.

Rosalind looked at Mrs. Weevelly questioningly. "Nearer than Madame?" she repeated in a puzzled tone.

"It's your own aunt! Your mother's only sister! She says she's been saving and sacrificing every thing since your mother died, so as to come and make a home for you. She's lovely!" and Mrs. Weevelly nodded convincingly "And she is in your room this very minute." And the landlady, with an expectant smile, stood waiting for Rosalind's expression of surprised happiness. But the girl made no response. She went slowly up the stairs, and Mrs. Weevelly, vaguely disappointed, returned to her basement sitting-room.

"Miss Allan's terrible reserved," she thought. "Probably she's overcome by her feelings. Well, I don't wonder. Being alone, and now having her aunt come all ready to stay and make a home for her. They'll probably take my parlors, back and front; Mrs. Law said she should want to stay right here."

And with the thought of good tenants in the vacant parlors Mrs. Weevelly smiled complacently, resolving to purchase the blue foulard silk she had wanted all summer.

Rosalind's thoughts were not so cheerful as she

slowly climbed the stairs. She had not thought of her aunt for months. She had believed that never again could Aunt Margie have power to send a moment's shadow across her life. And now here she was. Waiting to welcome her. The girl had a moment of fear as she reached the door of her room. What could she do if Aunt Margie insisted on living with her? The door was open, and seated by the open window was a young woman. Rosalind looked at her in amazement. This could not be her Aunt. But at that instant Mrs. Law looked up, and came rushing toward her.

Mrs. Law was forty-five. She had kept a girlish slenderness, her hair was as dark and abundant and as simply arranged as that of Rosalind herself. She had always taken excellent care of her own comfort and well-being; and it was little wonder that Rosalind looked at her in amazement. She felt her aunt's arms close around her, a succession of ardent kisses upon her face, and heard a silvery voice: "My own dear niece! My Elizabeth's child! I have lived through everything for this moment."

"Aunt Margie," Rosalind muttered, drawing herself from the clinging arms. "I didn't know you were so young and pretty," she stammered.

"You dear girl! But it is your love for your old aunt that makes you say so. No one who has



suffered as I have, who has given up all for those who never appreciated my sacrifice, who has had such a hard time, could look young," and the plaintive mouth drooped, the dark eyes saddened. But at the words "a hard time" Rosalind's heart had hardened against her aunt. It brought back the old days in Roxbury. She remembered her mother's pale, worn face and her steady toil for years.

"You are forty-five, aren't you, Aunt Margie? Of course that isn't really old," she said as she turned toward her closet to put away her hat and coat. She did not hear her aunt's response, for she was looking with wondering eyes into a closet filled to overflowing with delicate summer gowns. A faint perfume floated out from these well-cared-for frocks.

"I hung my dresses in your closet," she heard Aunt Margie explaining. "All last year's." But I have been seeing about a few clothes, dear child, while I have been waiting for your return. I'll try and not look too shabby."

Rose found a place for her things, and then seated herself on the bed. She was wondering what her aunt meant to do.

"Why didn't you let me know that you were coming, Aunt Margie?" she asked.

"I was afraid you would change some of your plans, dear child, and I want to make as little

trouble as possible. But you mustn't feel badly because you were not here to welcome me. I am used to taking care of myself."

Rosalind's resolve to in some way let her aunt realize that she could not live with her niece grew more firm at every word.

They went to a near-by restaurant for dinner. Mrs. Law did not eat much. She owned frankly that she was "fussy" about her food, that she could not eat everything. She said that she envied Rose her excellent appetite. On the way back to Pembroke street she purchased fruit, and a box of candy. In her room Rose had noticed a number of the recent sensational novels. She decided that her aunt must be well-supplied with money.

Rose took her bag into Madame's room and slept there that night. She resolved that before Madame's return her aunt should understand that she had not the slightest intention of living in the same house with her. She said to herself that if her aunt had been old, helpless, or ill she would have sacrificed her independence and taken care of her, even if there was no affection between them. But this selfish woman: "All those dresses, and buying more," the girl whispered angrily, as she lay in Madame's bed wondering about her aunt and what the great troubles of her life could have been. She recalled all the sacrifices her mother had made to

send money to "Aunt Margie." The very name had always meant sacrifice and trouble to her. "She can't make me live with her," Rose thought, half-fearfully.

"I don't believe that she ever earned a penny in her life."

But Rosalind was mistaken. Margaret Law at various times had found it desirable, even necessary to earn money. She had been a saleswoman in a department store; she had once filled the position as a companion for an elderly widow; and, quite recently, she had been employed in the cast of a film company for moving pictures. She had made good in none of these various employments. She had lost her chance in the department store because of her idleness and inaccuracy. In her position as companion she had complained so constantly as to the quality of the food, and the inattention of the servants to her demands, that her employer had lost patience and discharged her.

The work for the films had been hard, and so Mrs. Law gave it up. She decided that it was time that Elizabeth's daughter realized that she had an aunt. She knew Rosalind was earning money, and the girl ought to know that life had its responsibilities. She had been cautious in her efforts to secure information from Mrs. Weevely, but she found the landlady could not tell her very much. Neverthe-

less she had no doubt but the girl would prove as gullible as her mother had always been.

When Margaret Law's husband divorced her he had given her an annuity of a thousand dollars a year. He had done this through no obligation, but, as he had explained to his friends, because he did not want ever to think of her again. From the unfortunate man who had forgotten his honor in his infatuation for her, she had for many years received a small allowance. His wife, however, had refused to divorce him, and when he begged for pardon forgave him. Mrs. Law's sorrows, of which she had so often written to her sister, were the disappointments of an utterly material and selfish woman.

Undoubtedly she had failed in securing many things that she had greatly desired. Her extravagances had frequently left her penniless. But, on the whole, she had fed daintily, and slept softly, and worn fine raiment.

Mrs. Law had not been altogether sorry to find that her niece was out of town. Although she had encouraged Mrs. Weevly to believe that the parlors of the Pembroke street house would be exactly what she wanted as a home for Rosalind and herself, she had a vastly different scheme in mind. Already she had interviewed agents and janitors of apartment houses in Brookline and

the Back Bay. She said to herself that Rosalind should have a real home; and had a pleasing consciousness of her own unselfishness in being ready to take so much trouble for Elizabeth's child. She decided that it would be only fair for Rosalind to take the financial responsibility of the home. Mrs. Law began to see her future as a time of deserved reward. With her own income to spend upon herself and her pleasures, with no out-go for board or shelter, and with Rose at hand to render any little service which an aunt might rightly demand, she began to congratulate herself on her wisdom in coming to Boston.

But after a few hours of Rosalind's society Mrs. Law was not so confident. She said to herself that the girl was selfish, evidently without any natural affection for her only relative. When Rosalind had said good-night and gently closed the door behind her, Mrs. Law wished for a moment that she had stuck to the films. She sat by the window nibbling chocolates thoughtfully. If Rosalind would agree to the plans that her aunt had made Mrs. Law was prepared to be an affectionate relative, but if the girl acted selfishly she resolved to find some way to punish her. Perhaps not at the moment, but sometime. Then she reflected that she was worrying needlessly. She had not yet told the girl of her plans. Very likely Rose would be glad to have a

home. With this comforting conclusion Mrs. Law picked up one of the novels, whose heroine aroused her exultant envy and admiration, and soon forgot her own doubts and hopes.

Rosalind, in Madame's room, unpacked her bag, brushed her serge suit, selected a fresh waist to put on in the morning, and tried to think what she could do. She was glad that she had yet two days before beginning work. "Poor mother," thought the girl, recalling all her mother's patient work and unselfishness, and feeling a new anger against the youthful woman in the next room who had burdened her so needlessly.

"I will not live with her," Rose vowed again. "I wouldn't if she was worth a million dollars, and would buy me the old Wright house." She said again that if her aunt had been old, helpless — but it was absurd to sacrifice for a woman with so many dresses, she concluded with a little grimace, remembering the overflowing closet.

Rosalind was more sure of herself the next morning; and the sight of Mrs. Weevily stumbling up the stairs with a heavily-laden breakfast tray for Mrs. Law, lent the spur of anger to her determination. "That's what I would be doing in less than a week," she thought. Rose went out to the corner bakery for fresh rolls, made her own coffee over Madame's little gas stove, and ate her breakfast

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at the little round table where she had so often feasted happily with Madame. It was nine o'clock when she rapped at Mrs. Law's door.

"Come in, dear child, I have been longing to see you," said Aunt Margie, as Rose entered the room.

Aunt Margie was sitting up in bed, resting against the heaped-up pillows. She had evidently just finished manicuring her beautiful nails.

"You see, dear, I thought I would save trouble, and so had your landlady bring me up a cup of coffee. I didn't want to disturb you," and Aunt Margie's dark eyes turned pleadingly toward Rose, who, in her severe waist, and plain skirt, with her strong active figure, seemed an entirely different sort of a human being from the inert creature resting against the pillows.

"I see," responded Rose. "You had coffee, eggs, bacon, toast and grape-fruit, and an extra pitcher of cream. Well, that will cost you seventy-five cents, and Mrs. Weevly charges twenty-five cents for serving. I think that is only fair, as she has to bring the tray up three flights."

A little flush crept over Mrs. Law's face. It seemed to her that the girl was inclined to be insolent. But she replied in almost pleading tones. "Why, yes. But I never allow myself to worry over the cost of food. I always eat so little, that it isn't worth considering the cost."

"When are you going to get up?" Rose asked pleasantly.

She had resolved to accept a visit, since she needs must, but to find some way of telling her aunt positively that it could not be over long.

But Mrs. Law's temper had always been an uncertain quantity, and at Rosalind's question she drew herself to an upright position and replied with evident anger:

"I shall get up when I please."

"Oh. Then I suppose you will want me to rent a room for myself, and take out my things?" said Rose. "You see, I have to go back to the office in a day or two, and I would like to know how to plan."

Mrs. Law decided that she had been too hasty. After all, Rose had not said anything to show that she would not agree to do as her aunt wished.

"Dear child, sit down and I will tell you why I have made this expensive journey, and what I mean to do. I have come to make a home for my Elizabeth's child."

Rosalind did not sit down. She stood looking down at her aunt, wondering how she could tell her that she would not live with her. Mrs. Law went on with the story of her determination that she and Rose should have a home together. Rosalind's silence encouraged her, but after a little she stopped suddenly.



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"Well?" she questioned, a little note of defiance in her voice.

Rose shook her head.

"No!" she said, and stood waiting.

"What do you mean?" questioned Mrs. Law.

"I mean that your plan is not possible," replied the girl quietly.

"You mean that you refuse to live with me?" her aunt questioned.

"Yes," replied Rose, wishing that she could flee from the room and run so far that Aunt Margie could never overtake her, and knowing that she must stand fast.

"You are as selfish as your silly mother. Your father was nothing but a clerk. Neither of them ever offered me a home when I needed it, and you are like them. I knew the minute I looked at you that you were selfish." Mrs. Law did not care now what she said. She was sure that her plans were to be defeated, and she was thoroughly angry.

Rose listened with tense lips and shadowy eyes. The old worries of her girlhood seemed to echo in every word which her aunt spoke.

"I am going down stairs now, Aunt Margie, and tell Mrs. Weevly that she can take her choice of tenants. If you stay here of course I will find another place. But I want to tell you that I always was sure you were exactly what you are. My

mother worked and sacrificed for you all through my childhood." Rose stopped suddenly. What was the use of saying anything? she thought, and turned toward the door.

But Mrs. Law had not finished. She had a good deal more to say. She declared that she had borne everything from the people who should have tenderly cared for her. She poured out the story of her griefs and disappointments. And she concluded with reproaches at Rosalind's treatment of her.

"I will come back in an hour, and you can tell me what you mean to do. I will speak to Mrs. Weevly if you decide to stay here," said Rosalind, as she left the room.

Mrs. Law had seldom been as angry as she was at that moment. But she was accustomed to making quick decisions. Stay in this stuffy South-End lodging house? she thought, with a new cause of dislike toward Rosalind, that the girl should think such a thing possible. There were decent hotels, and the sooner she went to one the more comfortable she would be, she decided.

When Rose returned Mrs. Law was packing. She had apparently entirely forgotten her outburst of anger; she was plaintive and a trifle depressed. Rosalind wondered if her aunt might not be penniless, and only the sight of the expensive rings, the

dressing-case with its gold-topped bottles, reassured the girl. She was sure that her aunt could pawn those if need be, and hardened her heart.

"You can tell your landlady whatever you please," Aunt Margie said, as she pinned on the pretty, flowery hat before Rosalind's mirror. "I can't understand why you have treated me in this way, Rosalind. I only hope your selfish nature may prevent you from suffering as I have."

"I hope so, Aunt Margie," Rose answered, and Mrs. Law's effort to redeem herself vanished. "I hope I shall never set eyes on you again," she declared.

A cab had been called, and in a few moments Mrs. Law was saying a hurried good-bye to Mrs. Weevly. "Rosalind will tell you all about it. So sorry to leave your delightful house," she called back as she entered the waiting cab.

Within the hour Mrs. Weevly rapped at Rosalind's door.

"Excuse me, Miss Allan, but I want to ask if your aunt spoke to you about the money she borrowed? I let her have ten dollars last week, and this morning she borrowed ten more."

"That will be all right, Mrs. Weevly. I will pay it when you give me the bill for my aunt's meals," Rosalind responded smilingly, almost grateful for this further proof of her aunt's unworthiness.

It was a month later when Madame Ress returned from Bar Harbor. Rosalind was rejoiced to see her. She told her of her aunt's unexpected appearance, and of her own feeling in regard to Aunt Margie, and Madame agreed that no other course had been possible for Rosalind. But Rosalind made no further confidences. She spoke of Mrs. Spencer, and described Mrs. Leland's unswerving views in regard to the becoming conduct of a lady. But she said nothing of the old Wright house, nor did she continue to talk of her "dream house"; it had become a reality, and she did not venture to continue her former confidences, fearing she might unconsciously make too real a picture of the deserted house and her stay under its sheltering roof.

Madame had been sorry to find that Rosalind's aunt had discovered her. From Rosalind's description it seemed probable that at some future day Rosalind would have a similar experience to meet. Madame observed a certain change in the girl that even Aunt Margie's visit could not explain. She wondered if Rose in her business life had not met some man to whom she was attracted, but she did not ask the girl's confidence. Rosalind continued to study French; they spent many evenings together, and as the autumn drifted into winter Madame became even more confident that Rosalind had some interest beside her studies and work. Some-

thing even more than her plan to own a house and garden of her own.

As Christmas time drew near the two friends decided that they would, a night or two before the holiday, go to the theatre. Madame purchased the tickets for "As You Like It," in good season, and they both looked forward to the evening's pleasure. Rosalind was ready before Madame, and as she entered her friend's room Madame looked at her admiringly.

Rose wore a gown of some thin blue material. It was made in the most simple manner. The deep collar of soft white mull had been Madame's suggestion. Rose felt that an evening of delight was before her. She was eager for them to start. As they walked down the windy street Rosalind suddenly decided to tell Madame about the deserted house; not all the story, but that she had seen the very house which she would like to own. She described it, talking rapidly, and saying that the place had been deserted for years.

She had finished the story when they reached the theatre, and as they took their seats Madame was assuring her that if the house was not occupied its owner would probably be glad to sell it. The lights were lowered, and Rosalind instantly became intent upon the play. Not until the end of the first scene did she have a glance even for Madame. Then, as

she turned toward her companion with an expression of delight, she found herself looking straight into the blue eyes of the young man whose cigarette-case was at that moment in the upper drawer of her bureau.

For a surprised instant their looks met. Then Rosalind was conscious that Madame was speaking. She realized that her face had flushed, that the young man must have seen that she recognized him. She wished that she dared look at him again. She did not hear what Madame was saying. She was back in the delightful old kitchen, looking bravely at a shabby young man who had just eaten the supper she had prepared for herself. How queerly he had looked at her. Well, whoever he was, he could not know that she had no more right in that old house than he had. Of course he thought she belonged there. What was he doing here? Rosalind's thoughts came to a full stop. Madame's hand touched her own, and she realized that Madame was waiting for an answer to some question, which she had not even heard. She tried to explain her pre-occupation by quickly commenting upon the play. Madame responded with interest. Then suddenly a new emotion took possession of the girl. This young man would go out from the theatre and she would never see him again. Never even know his name. She looked up at Madame with so

much unhappiness in her glance that her companion was startled.

“What is it, Rosalind?” she whispered.

“It is nothing. Believe me, Madame; it is nothing,” she answered quickly.

But Madame was not a dull person. This peculiar young man beside her knew Rosalind. She was sure of it. Her quick eyes had seen their unspoken recognition of each other. She wondered if she should ask the girl about him, but decided that Rosalind was in any event to be trusted. If she spoke to Madame of her own accord it would be much better. If she did not speak — Why, then all Madame could do was to be a little more kind to the friendless girl. It was a long time in the future before Madame was to receive the confidence she hoped for.

Leaving the theatre Madame Ress realized that the young man intended following them, and it was her quickness which defeated him. As the crowd closed about them Madame drew Rosalind into a shadowy doorway. “The crowd, my child, we will let it pass,” she said, and Rosalind silently agreed; and saw Wright with his eager questioning eyes vanish in the darkness.

“Now we can go home with less danger,” said Madame, a few moments later; and Rosalind realized that her friend had been conscious of the stranger’s

persistence in keeping close to them, and had planned to evade him.

Rosalind tried to speak as usual, but she knew that her voice had a new inflection, and that what she was saying sounded unreal. As they left the street car and walked down Pembroke street they were each too busy with their own thoughts to notice the other's silence. The kindly little Frenchwoman was wondering if there was not some way in which she could help Rosalind, and Rosalind's thoughts were of many things! Of her dull and stunted girlhood, and the sordid conditions which had made their home uncomfortable and unattractive. She thought bitterly of her mother's patience and cheerfulness. For the first time, in the days that had passed since her acceptance of the fact of her mother's death, she was hopelessly unhappy. When they said good night Madame noticed that Rosalind had been crying.

"Ah! It is indeed deeper than I thought," she decided mournfully, as she entered her own room, and heard the door close behind Rosalind. Rosalind turned up the flickering gas, took off her coat and the pretty dress, and slipped on a warm wrapper. She was not sleepy. She did not want to go to bed. She was tempted to go to Madame's room and tell her the whole silly story of the old house; of the man who had come to the door, the same man who had



sat beside them that evening. But it seemed too vague and unreal a story to interest even Madame, she decided. From the upper drawer of her bureau she took out the silver case. In a moment the fragrance of a cigarette filled the room. She stood before the narrow mirror watching the reflected spirals. She wished that Madame might suddenly open the door. Then she could so easily tell the story of the cigarette.

"It isn't the fragrance of honeysuckle or roses, but some way it smells like all the fragrance of that old garden," she thought.

An instant later the half-smoked cigarette was hurled from the open window.

"I won't be a sentimental fool," she whispered. "I don't know the man, and I never shall see him again. All I need to think about is earning more money, if I really mean to have a house of my own before I'm sixty."

The day after the theatre experience was a busy one for Wright Peters. He found Walter in his office, and apparently glad to see him. Walter listened with evident amusement to Wright's brief account of the sales of hay and timber, and congratulated him on his unexpected good fortune. Wright did not speak of his air-ship. As Wright rose to leave, Walter looked at him smilingly.

"Haven't got a job yet, have you? You know

you can't pull through six years on the money you have on hand."

"Oh, I have a job," he answered quickly, suddenly conscious of the old-time antagonism that Walter had always had toward him. "I'm at work, and I live in the old house and do for myself. My board doesn't cost as much as you spend for cigars."

Walter looked at him more sharply. For the first time it occurred to him that Wright might pull through after all, and come in for his rightful share of the Peters' wealth. The thought was not wholly pleasant. But he nodded approvingly.

"Glad to hear you are learning the worth of money," he said smilingly. "Sorry I can't put you up, but the fact is I have shut up the house. Costs too much to keep it going just for one person. I'm boarding over at the West End. Think I'll sell the house."

"Sell the house?" repeated Wright, thinking he had misunderstood. It did not seem possible that Walter could consider such a thing, especially as he would probably soon be married.

"Yes; or I may decide to tear it down and put up a good apartment building. There isn't one in that part of the city, and I believe it would be a good investment," replied Walter.

"Where will you and Beryl live?" asked Wright.

Walter laughed a little uneasily.

"Oh, well, that's a good way in the future. In fact, Wright, Beryl and I have talked it over, and decided to postpone our marriage for a year or two."

"A year or two?" again Wright repeated his brother's words. "I am going to see Beryl this afternoon," he added quickly, "and I must be off. I am in town for only a day or two."

"Got to get back to your work, I suppose," responded Walter, and the brothers said good-bye.

It was nearly noon before Wright finished his business with the firm of propeller-makers, with whose engineer he discussed dimensions, combers and pusher machines to his heart's content. Wright had his own design from which he wanted a propeller made. The engineer's evident interest made Wright rejoice that he had already secured his patents.

"River Junction," repeated the salesman to whom Wright gave his order, "I was at Riverdale one summer. Didn't imagine there was such a thing as an aeroplane plant within a hundred miles."

"Oh, I am only an amateur," responded Wright.

"Rather a dull part of the world down there," continued the man amiably. But Wright was not interested in discussing Maine scenery. He had many things to purchase for his work, and he did not mean to be cheated out of the twilight hour with Beryl; and every moment of the short De-

ember afternoon was filled with his necessary search for the things he needed. The early dusk found him walking briskly down Beacon street.

"Of course I expected you," Beryl assured him, as he stood smiling before her. "And I have expected to hear from you ever since last spring. Now tell me everything," and just as Wright had dreamed, Beryl led him toward the broad cushioned window-seat overlooking the esplanade and the river. Wright looked at her with a new consciousness of her beauty.

"You wear such pretty clothes, Beryl," he said, touching the sleeve of her dull red silken frock.

"Of course I do," she responded smilingly. "Now tell me all about everything. What you have been doing, and why we have not heard from you?"

"I have been working. Look!" and he held out his brown work-hardened hands. "I have put in twelve hours good solid work every day since the first of August. I am that long-desired man of every reformer's vision: laborer and capitalist in one."

Beryl's eager eyes were fixed upon him.

"You are more interesting than a Shaw play, Wright, and just as difficult to make any sense out of. What are you really doing? And where did you get any money?"

Then Wright told her of the old house, of which

she had always vaguely known. He described the tangled garden, the pine woods and the meadow. He told her about the Griffiths and Mr. Holden and Orrin. He spoke of securing a patent for the new aeroplane engine, and would gladly have drawn her a working model, had she not interrupted him.

"But what do you do for human society? Where do you go evenings?" she questioned.

"Human society? Evenings?" he repeated, as if hardly comprehending the meaning of the words. "My dear girl, for the first time in my life I am the master of my soul, and able to do exactly as I wish. I usually work evenings. Sometimes I am so tired that there isn't any evening. I go fast asleep as soon as I have eaten my supper. My only weakness is that I do sometimes think of this pleasant room, and of you, Beryl."

"Of course you do. You ought to be nearer, Wright, so that Walter and I could see you often. There comes the river's necklace," she added, turning toward the window.

For a moment they watched the glowing line of shining lights.

"What are you going to do with your airship?" Beryl questioned.

"Offer it to the Government for Army use," Wright answered gravely.

Beryl laughed. She said to herself that Wright

always took himself too seriously. He was clever, of course, but —

“You are really sure of it, then? What does Walter say about it?”

“He doesn’t know. And you must not tell him, Beryl. You see, he isn’t interested. He wouldn’t care.”

“Of course I won’t tell him. But you mustn’t misjudge Walter. You know he doesn’t always show what he feels.” Her voice was grave; she rose from the window seat and moved toward the fire. As she passed the table she switched on the light, and, with a sense of disappointment and defeat, Wright realized that the long-hoped-for hour with Beryl was over.

“It is too late to offer you tea, and I am dining out,” she said, and before Wright could respond a maid stood at the door.

“Madame Ress is here, Miss,” she said.

“Ask her to come in. You must see her, Wright. She is the dearest person. My French teacher, you know. She is going abroad with me. We are sailing early in the spring. I almost forgot to tell you. Come tomorrow and hear all about it and stay to dinner.”

“I mustn’t stay another moment, Beryl. I’ll come tomorrow, thank you,” and Wright moved quickly toward the door. He had no inclination

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to meet a stranger; and so he passed Madame in the hall, with no premonition that she was the person who could solve the question he most wished answered and not recognizing his neighbor of the theatre.

## CHAPTER SIX

**W**HEN Wright left the train at River Junction the day after Christmas it was already dark. Mr. Holden greeted him as one returned from far lands and great adventures.

"Didn't half expect you'd come back before spring," he declared.

"Why not?" questioned the young man. "I am glad enough to get back," he added.

"Saw your brother, I s'pose?" questioned Mr. Holden, walking down the platform beside Wright, "I don't begrudge you your tramp home. It's below zero this minute."

"Good night," called Wright, and he swung off down the road at a quick pace.

"Guess he thought it was too cold to talk much," decided Mr. Holden, thrashing his arms across his well-protected chest, as he hastened back to the shelter of the stove-heated office.

The snow crisped and crackled under Wright's feet. He could see the lights of distant farmhouses across the white fields. There was no wind, and the piercing cold forced him into a run. He was hungry, and had a certain happy sense of home-



coming as he ran up the well-shoveled path to the kitchen door.

The room was bright and warm, and Orrin, with a large gingham apron tied about his waist, was watching a dish of sizzling sausages on the kitchen stove.

"Gee! I'm glad you're home," he exclaimed, as Wright opened the door.

"So am I," Wright responded smilingly. "Hope you have enough sausages for two. I'm hungry."

Orrin nodded.

"Sure," he declared happily.

"I'll give that stove a good cleaning tomorrow," thought Wright, as he cast a disapproving glance at the kitchen stove, evidently sadly neglected since his departure.

As he sat down at the table to eat the hot sausages and corn bread which Orrin sat before him, he thought of his first meal in that room. Why had he not had the courage to speak to the girl at the theatre? "Confound it!" he exclaimed, to Orrin's evident dismay. "Sensitive tooth," he explained briefly, and the boy nodded understandingly.

Wright finished his supper, and went in to the sitting-room where Orrin had started a roaring fire. He lit his pipe and stretched out on the big settle and reviewed his visit to Boston. It had not been much of a success, he decided. The Christmas

dinner at the Masons' had been almost a punishment to him. Mr. Mason had been the only cheerful person at the table. Two middle-aged relatives of the Masons, Walter and Wright were the guests, and it was evident that Walter was ill at ease. The two brothers left the house together, and as Beryl bade them good-bye she said to Walter:

"Remember, you promised to tell Wright."

"Probably he has guessed it before this time," Walter had responded.

As they reached the street Wright had asked eagerly, "What's the news?" wondering to himself if it might not be that Beryl and Walter had again changed their plans, and were to be married very soon.

"Oh, well, our engagement is off," Walter had responded, a little impatiently. "We found out in time that we were not suited to each other. That's all."

Wright had made no rejoinder. He said to himself that whatever the trouble was it was Walter's fault. But after all, it was wholly their own affair. Neither of the brothers spoke again until they reached the corner where their ways separated.

"I'm going to Maine tomorrow, so I'll say good-bye," Wright had said. "Sorry about this break with Beryl," he had added a little stiffly.

"Oh, these things happen, you know. Why

don't you try your luck? You've always been half in love with her," Walter responded sneeringly.

"You talk like a fool," Wright had answered sharply, and with a quick good-night, he had hurried away.

Wright recalled his brother's words with a new sense of anger, as he lay watching the dancing flames. Then he said to himself that he had something else to do in the world than bother about other people's love affairs. He resolutely fixed his thoughts on his airship. But it was no use, he was back again in the theatre, watching a dark-haired girl.

He put out his pipe, covered the fire, and went to bed.

The next morning he returned to his work with a resolute determination to think of nothing else. For a month he worked steadily. All day and until late each evening his work occupied his thoughts. In February he realized that his ideas were taking visible form. He was confident that his airship would go through water as well as air, and he was eager for the ice and snow to disappear that he might make the trial trips.

One morning in March he awoke to the cheerful, whistling note of the black-bird.

"It's spring," thought Wright, with a thrill of hopefulness.

There was a sense of exhilaration in the air,

a subtle fragrance of earth and coming warmth. He hurried to dress and get out of doors, although it was barely sunrise. As he opened the kitchen door he disturbed a couple of song sparrows on the steps. But for the leafless trees and the lines of snow about the walls, it might have been a morning in June. The sun was already warm on his shoulders as he walked across the fields toward the river. This weather would soon break up the ice, and with the river open he could make sure of his work, he thought happily. A whirring sound above his head made him stop and look upward. A flock of wild geese were winging their way steadily northward against the clear blue of the March sky. Wright watched them fly on until they were but dim specks in the distance.

“Good!” he exclaimed aloud, “that means an early spring.”

The ice-bound river showed many cracks and bits of open water, and Wright came back to his house eager for breakfast, and for his work. He found Orrin up, and their oatmeal porridge and coffee ready, while a slice of ham broiled noisily over the fire.

“I’m glad it’s warmer,” said Orrin. “Guess spring is coming early this year.”

Wright told of the wild geese he had seen, and the boy nodded wisely.

"That's a sure sign; we'll get the plane out 'fore you know it," he declared.

The commercial value of his work did not loom large in Wright's consciousness. But he was becoming more and more absorbed by the possibilities of his invention. He would offer it to his Government. He almost wished that the United States might have a little scrap over some boundary line, so that airships might at once be necessary; and he could be of service.

"It's going to keep pleasant for a spell," Orrin assured him, as he followed Wright to the shop. "The wind's blowing right, and the smoke is going up straight. Sure sign. Why can't we fix up the hangars today?"

Wright agreed. Orrin watched his employer's quick movements as he adjusted the ropes and swung the plane.

"Wish I wasn't so darned fat. I don't s'pose a feller as fat as I am could ever be an aviator?" Orrin said.

"You needn't be so fat," replied Wright.

"How can I help it?" questioned Orrin, a little resentfully. He said to himself that was the way folks talked when they didn't know anything about it. Mr. Peters ate twice as much as he, Orrin, did. But did he get fat? Of course he didn't. It was just a matter of luck.

"How can I help it?" he repeated.

"You can lose twenty pounds and be all the better for it," replied Wright, and as he described the daily exercises and the diet necessary to achieve this happy condition Orrin listened eagerly.

"Say! Could I be an aviator if I got thin?" he questioned.

"Of course you could."

"Well, you write down all those things. I'm going to begin right off. Gee! It'll be hard not to have any of mother's mince pie; and I dunno how I'll give up doughnuts. But I will," he declared firmly. "It's worth it."

"I'll take the exercises with you," suggested Wright. "I am getting a little soft myself."

Orrin glowed with pride. The only drawback to his complete happiness was that he could not tell his good fortune to some of his former playmates in the village, and see their envious wonder. He was sure of one thing, however, when the time came for him to go sailing about in an airplane the fellows would have to know it. Nobody could hope to keep a great happening like that quiet, whatever his boss might think.

That afternoon they cleared out the floor of the old barn, swept and scrubbed it, and rigged a trapeze. Orrin had his first lesson in gymnastics. Wright sent to Boston for a punching-bag and a

fencing outfit, and Orrin could hardly contain his pride and delight when, at the end of the first week of his training, he found his weight less by two pounds. He soon showed the benefit of his endeavor. He stood more erectly; moved more easily, and achieved a certain confidence in himself which he had never before possessed.

Fortunately for Wright's wish for privacy there were no boys of Orrin's age in the neighborhood; and Orrin was too busy to go often to the village. Nevertheless he knew himself a boy to be envied. He wished, however, that his parents did not insist on his spending every Sunday at home.

"I s'pose they're afraid I'll work, or somethin', if I stay over here," Orrin had concluded. "Seems a pity to waste Sundays the way my folks do. Just sit around and find fault with me, 'cause I want to do somethin'."

Wright encouraged Orrin in his hope of becoming an aviator. He told the boy he would have to become an expert mathematician, and Orrin was at once eager to study. The books of adventure were no longer his chief resource. With Wright's assistance he was working at algebra. His ambitions were awakened; and whatever might happen to separate him from Wright, Orrin would not drop into the half-awake existence he had formerly led.

April came with its soft winds and warm days.

The ice drifted slowly down the stream. The river lay smiling and clear, and the day arrived when all was ready for Wright's trial trip.

The aeroplane swung in the hangars on a slope near the river. Orrin, tense and alert, had received Wright's final instructions. The small row-boat was ready; if the plane did not fulfill Wright's expectations Orrin was to go to his assistance.

It was early in the morning, and there was little chance that anyone would see the success or failure of Wright's flight. He had no doubt the plane would fulfill all his hopes in the air, but how it would work on the water was yet to be proved.

It rose smoothly, skimmed across the river, then down the stream. Wright, happier than he had ever been in his life, guided the plane into higher flights, turning it skilfully back and forth, and at last letting it drop in a long curve to the river. Orrin, a rigid figure on the river-bank, kept his eyes fixed on the plane. As it struck the water he heard Wright's triumphant cheer, and answered it enthusiastically. But suddenly the plane darted upward, hung for a brief instant in the air, and with a splutter and bang fell straight into the river.

Orrin knew exactly what to do. In a moment he was in the boat and rowing with all his might in the direction of the partly submerged plane. He heard no call from Wright, and a great fear took



possession of him. Suppose Wright was drowning, held down by the heavy plane?

A bird lit on the window sill and sang shrilly. Wright sat up. His head ached, and as he moved he called out sharply, for there was an agonizing pain in his back. He sank back into his pillows wondering why Mrs. Griffith should be standing beside his bed; why he should be in bed anyway.

She held a blue cup to his lips, murmuring something about a doctor, and a little later he opened his eyes again, and a stout, smiling man was holding his wrist in a light clasp.

"Trying to fly, were you, young man?" said the stout man. "Well, no bones broken. A day or two in bed will bring you out all right."

Wright looked at him vaguely. He wanted to explain to this smiling person that he could fly all right. That he knew exactly why the plane had acted as it had, and that he could remedy the fault as soon as he could get to work. But, somehow he was too sleepy to talk.

It was three days later when Wright crept down the stairs, and listened to Orrin's story of the fall of the plane, and of his rescue from the wreckage. Wright had been stunned, and but for Orrin's strength and quickness would inevitably have drowned.

"Guess I never could have managed it six months ago," said the boy, anxious for Wright to know that he had no need to thank him.

Although he had told the story briefly, Wright realized that the boy must have worked with great skill and strength to get him clear of the wreckage and into the boat.

"I got the Griffiths as quick as I could," Orrin concluded.

"Very few men could have worked as skilfully as you managed, Orrin. You have the right make-up for an aviator," said Wright, and the boy flushed happily, feeling that he was praised and rewarded beyond his deepest wish.

By early June the farmers for miles around River Junction had become familiar with the sight of Wright's "flying machine" swooping over their fields. It gave them a never-failing topic for conversation, and when Wright's second attempt to send his plane through the water failed, it was regarded as a joke which could be gleefully discussed when all other topics failed. Mr. Griffith found himself the most popular man in the neighborhood that summer, and was loudly scorned, with delighted haw-haws, when he declared his belief that:

"Young Peters will make it work if it can be done."

"But it can't be done," they assured him.

“Taint natural fer man ter fly, if 't was meant he should fly he would have been born with wings. It's a temptin' Providence. 'T won't amount to nuthing in the long run.” And, having settled the aviation problem with the usual finality of ignorance, they referred to young Peters as being a “little light in the upper story,” and nodded to each other with knowing grins. It became a general opinion that Old Peters had known what he was about in not giving Wright control of money until the boy had learned “some sense.” For it was a profound belief among these people that years, and years alone, brought wisdom; although there was no manifest evidence in the way or manner of their lives that they had made any use whatever of such brains as the Lord might have bestowed upon them.

As the summer days lengthened, Wright's love for long solitary walks sent him off in the early evenings on long tramps over the pastures and along the country roads. There was a distant hill covered with tall pines which was generally the object of these evening walks, and here he would lay for hours watching the stars, and listening to the soft air moving among the branches of the trees. In the days of his shy boyhood he had always been much by himself, and beyond his friendly companionship with Beryl, had known but few women. In these quiet, fragrant nights his thoughts centered

about the unknown girl who had lived in his house the previous summer. He was possessed by an absurd wish that he might again see her open the door of his kitchen, and he somehow felt very confident that it would come to pass. One night he slept under the pines until the morning calls and twitterings of nesting birds awakened him. The fresh, cool air swept about him, and he breathed it in happily with a new delight in life, a certain consciousness of strength. He ran down the hill to the river, plunging into its shadowy coolness, then hurrying out to run half-clothed across the fields to his silent house, and hungrily devouring a good part of the fresh loaf, with long draughts from the jar of creamy milk, these daily supplies having been left on the kitchen step by Mr. Griffith only a few moments before Wright's arrival.

"Guess the 'Boss' has thought out what ails the plane," concluded Orrin, seeking for a reason for his employer's good spirits, as they worked over a new wing for Wright's sea-plane that morning.

"Mrs. Spencer's boarders have come," Orrin announced as an opening to conversation.

"What boarders?" questioned Wright, with little interest as to Orrin's response, but wishing to show a friendly interest in a world which was promising him so much.

"Well, there's a couple of folks from out-west;

and there's a girl from Boston. The girl walked up here last night. I guess she was surprised when she saw that folks were living here."

"Why?" questioned Wright aimlessly.

"Oh, I dunno; only she used to be up around here considerable. I used to see her. Guess she used to dig up roots and things."

Orrin must have been flattered by Wright's sudden interest. He was glad that he could tell the 'Boss' that the girl's name was Miss Rosalind Allan, and he grinned delightedly when Wright stopped work and exclaimed.

"Rosalind?"

"Sure," responded Orrin, "Mrs. Spencer told me."

## CHAPTER SEVEN

WELL, I'm sure I'm pleased enough to see you," Mrs. Spencer declared radiantly, as she hurried down the path to meet Rosalind, and to insist upon carrying the heavy bag to the house.

"The Lelands are here, just the same as last year," she continued, leading the way up the narrow stairs.

"It is lovely as ever," responded Rosalind, looking about the neat little room with so much satisfaction that Mrs. Spencer reached for her apron strings and drew them a little closer. She had great news for Rosalind, but not the time to do it full justice at that moment. The raised biscuit were ready to be set in the oven, the heat was exactly right, it was no time to delay; and with a friendly smile she hurried away, calling back that supper would be ready in half an hour.

Rosalind opened her bag, but turned away from it to look from the window and to rejoice that she was again under Mrs. Spencer's friendly roof. Mrs. Spencer stepped briskly about her kitchen.

## 114 A CHALLENGE TO ADVENTURE

It was not every house, she reflected with satisfaction, where one could look from their windows and see aeroplanes skimming about. Miss Allan was one to appreciate it. Mrs. Spencer resolved to wait until the next morning when perhaps Rosalind would appear in the kitchen for her early breakfast, as on the previous summer. Then she would tell her the whole story of young Peters; all about his father's queer will, about the young man's unexpected appearance at the old farmhouse and settling down to live there; of the building of the flying machines; and of the accidents which seemed to befall the young man with almost startling regularity. Mrs. Spencer smiled happily to herself as she pictured Rosalind's interest and surprise when she heard the story.

As Rosalind stood looking across the fields she heard Mrs. Spencer's voice uplifted in song. "I'm the lily of the valley —" sounded clearly as her hostess entered the dining-room, then, more faintly as Mrs. Spencer retreated to the kitchen, "The bright rose of Sharon —" and, finally, as her duties carried her to the pantry, the song died away.

Rosalind smiled to herself. Nothing had changed since last year, she thought. She would do exactly as on the previous summer; stay two weeks with Mrs. Spencer, with long days in the deserted house and garden, and then move in and take possession

of the quiet rooms for two more weeks of content and joy. No fear of a visitor this year, she decided, with a swift thought for the owner of the silver case. Possibly another walking trip might bring him again to the old house, he might even call and demand the case. "Let him. I almost wish he would," Rose acknowledged.

Since Madame Ress's departure with Miss Mason for a year's travel in Europe, Rose had made new resolves against loneliness. She had studied her French with determination, if not with her early enthusiasm. She read the books suggested by Madame, and the theatre gave her a new and satisfying source of escape from dull hours. If she sometimes rebelled against the routine of her days, her lack of the romance which books and plays made the very breath of life, she none the less valiantly resolved to make the best of such small joys as might come her way; and would recall her experience in the old house with a sense of not having wholly missed adventure.

Mrs. Leland expressed a mild degree of interest in again meeting Miss Allan. She was not surprised when Rosalind started off directly after supper for a walk.

"Miss Allan has queer ideas about a restful vacation," she remarked, "but I suppose Boston women think that they must walk and exercise.



I have always understood that they weren't as feminine as Western women," and with a little flutter of her "feminine" draperies she established herself in the comfortable wooden rocking-chair on the narrow porch. To Mrs. Leland the word "feminine" meant a delightful mingling of irresponsibility, laziness, and a wholly unearned sense of superiority. Let women tramp about, earn their own living, get sun-burned and vigorous, if that was what they wanted; she, Imogen Leland, a graduate of Miss De Mote's boarding school, had been taught more lady-like ways, thank heaven. So she adjusted a chiffon scarf about her scrawny shoulders and comfortably swayed back and forth, while Mr. Leland sat, in his proper place, at her feet on the broad step and smoked a cigar. He preferred a pipe, but what did that matter, when Imogen had assured him that "gentlemen" naturally smoked cigars when graciously permitted to smoke at all in the presence of their household angel. Mr. Leland could have told Rosalind that she was not the only one whom Romance had passed by.

There was a young moon in the western sky, and the air was full of a summer night's fragrance.

"I'll just take a look at the house, and tomorrow I will write Madame and tell her the whole story; all my deceit and housebreaking, and everything," resolved Rosalind, as she walked along the road.

"I am happy and I don't know of any great reason for it," she thought; forgetting that she was young, and that she was walking under a summer moon. The familiar way soon brought her a glimpse of the shadowy grey roof and its sheltering trees. But she was conscious of a vague sense of difference as she neared the place. The overgrown hedge had been trimmed, the road was no longer grass-grown. She heard a boy's whistle, and suddenly she was face to face with the boy, an alert, straight-standing boy, who touched his hat as if saluting an officer, when she spoke to him.

"Yes'm, the house was occupied. It's owner lives there now," Orrin had replied with sober dignity. He would gladly have lingered and explained to Mrs. Spencer's boarder, as he had quickly recognized her to be, that the aeroplane which she would be sure to see, if she looked heavenward and toward the river on almost any clear day, was the invention and achievement of the owner of the old house; "of my 'Boss,'" he would have been proud to add. But Rosalind had not lingered. Her brief "Thank you," seemed to Orrin to convey more of disappointment than of surprise.

Rosalind's happiness had vanished. Her plans were all defeated by Orrin's words. There would be no flowering garden to tend; no blue forget-me-nots from the edge of the singing brook. No long

hours of restful content on the broad couch with Jane Austen or Anthony Trollope for the best of company.

"But I will have joy though I steal, beg or borrow. 'Good-bye,'" she sang defiantly, recalling her childish vow never to be conquered by ill-fortune. "Tu ne cede malis," she repeated the phrase from an old text-book and endeavored to scorn her own disappointment in finding that the garden of her dreams had been taken possession of by its legal owner, and before she entered her quiet room she had resolved, with a little sense of the injustice of things in general, to make the most of her vacation in any way which might offer. There was Mrs. Spencer, she remembered gratefully, and the early morning breakfasts.

The birds, telling each other their plans for a busy day, awakened her at an early hour the next morning, and she was soon tip-toeing down the stairs.

"There!" exclaimed Mrs. Spencer, with a smile of satisfaction as Rose entered the kitchen, "I said to myself that I wondered if you'd keep to your last summer's ways and have breakfast along with me. Mr. Spencer's had his. I tell him he might just as well not bother about eating at all. Just a cup of coffee and a couple of eggs and a biscuit, and away he goes. Where you off to this morning?"

"I thought I'd go over to the pines, and take a dip into the river," answered Rose.

"Well, I don't see no reason why you shouldn't," agreed Mrs. Spencer. "You might keep your eye out for flying-machines," she continued with an effort to speak as if such craft were as usual in her heavens as crows. "Young Peters, he who owns the old Wright place, and has come to live in it, is trying to make an airship that will be a boat when he wants it to. So far it don't seem to work just right, and the young man has been thrown about considerable; just as if he was breaking in a young colt. He came here about a year ago, and some folks say he's sort of queer, but I guess all that ails him is being an inventor. The Griffiths kind of keep an eye on him, and take care of him when his machine kicks up and he gets all bruised."

Rosalind listened as eagerly as Mrs. Spencer had expected.

"Who was Wright Peters?" she questioned, and Mrs. Spencer told the story of the romantic meeting of his mother and father, and had begun with the no less interesting story of his grandfather who had built the house, when sounds from the upper floor aroused her to the fact that she had other boarders, who would soon want their breakfast.

"Land! I'd better stop talking, and set to and make an omelet for the Lelands." And with

a little sigh Mrs. Spencer returned to everyday life.

"They don't seem real pleased with what I set before 'em no matter what it may be," she continued.

"They come summer after summer, don't they? They would not come if they were not contented," suggested Rose.

"Well, I can't do no different, anyway," said Mrs. Spencer, pulling vigorously at her apron strings. "Do you want to take a bite of lunch along with you?"

Before the Lelands appeared Rose was on her way across the rough pasture which led to the pines. There were two stone walls to climb, and a narrow little brook to cross.

"This must be the brook which crosses the garden," thought Rose, as she turned to look back at it. Song sparrows and robins were skimming over her in lazy, sweeping flights; and Rosalind watched them idly as she rested for a moment before climbing the rough slope.

She repeated to herself that happiness was to be found in these summer fields; but she was unhappily conscious of a sense of defeat. It was as if Romance and Adventure had opened a door and smilingly beckoned, only to close the door as she approached. Summer skies and murmuring pines were, after all,

meant but as a background for Joy. They were not enough for Youth.

It was still early morning when she reached the shade of the big trees. Leaving the basket which held her lunch between two closely growing young trees, and secured by a heavy stone against possible marauding squirrels, she went down the further slope to the river. After a brief search she found a small cove sheltered by overhanging branches of a big beech tree. It might have been a woodland pool in some far wilderness in its quiet and seclusion.

With an exclamation of delight Rose slipped off her clothes and slid into the cool water. She forgot her disappointment, the dullness of her life. Here was a new experience; she would learn to swim, she resolved, and made vain splashing efforts, venturing almost beyond her depth, and struggling to her feet again with little gasps of delight. Wading out as far as she dared to venture she stood looking across the morning quiet of the river. A queer droning noise like that of a huge bumblebee in flight, made her look upwards. The noise grew louder, and in a moment a huge fish-like creature passed over the cove swaying and droning.

"The Inventor and his flying-machine," thought Rose, but so intent on the clear water and fragrant air, that for the moment she forgot that this was

the stranger who had snatched away her house and garden.

She dressed quickly, and spread the bath towel to dry over a bush of glossy-leaved laurel.

"This is joy," she declared aloud, with a new sense of happiness and well-being. How much she had missed all her life in being shut between city walls; in being held to constant effort to earn a living wage. Mrs. Spencer could have told her that country life was not all summer skies and restful mornings under pine trees, and, indeed, Rosalind had a keen sense of the hard work accomplished by the women in the picturesque farm-houses, but for the moment it seemed a paradise to the tired girl. The soft lap of the water against the river banks, the whisper of the swaying branches of the pines, blended like half-forgotten music, and with a sigh of grateful content she closed her eyes. It was high noon when she awoke and made her way up the hill to where her luncheon awaited her. The basket was well filled, and she found herself unexpectedly hungry. As she ate the good home-made bread, and the slices of cold chicken, and drank the cool creamy milk from her thermos bottle, she was conscious that life was being very kind to her.

"This is joy," she repeated again, but added: "It isn't happiness. Happiness means sharing. I wish Madame was here."

It was late in the afternoon when she started back across the pastures. The morning charm and delight had faded. Her thoughts traveled back to the shabby little home of her childhood days, with a new sense of her brave mother's sacrifices. Mrs. Spencer wondered a little over Rosalind's unusual quiet as she came into the kitchen.

"I am going to bed," Rosalind announced, as she finished her supper, "I believe I'm really tired."

"Land, I hope she aint going to be sick," thought Mrs. Spencer, "but if she is, it's lucky she's here where she can be taken care of, and not shut off by herself in a city boarding house," for Mrs. Spencer had her own opinion of cities, and the way life was endured in their lonely habitations.

Rosalind slept for several hours, but wakened suddenly to find a big, round moon staring in at her windows as if mocking her for wasting the summer nights of her flying youth. She was no longer tired or ready for sleep. The heavy fragrance of honeysuckle drifted about her. After a little she arose and went to the window.

"It's wicked to stay in," she whispered to herself, and dressed, moving cautiously about the room. She opened her door softly, and went down the narrow stairs. The outer door swung open noiselessly, and Rosalind ran down the path and was alone in the moonlit country road. She heard the



clock strike twelve. The moon beckoned her, the stars glimmered smilingly above the grey road, fragrance and beauty rose to meet her from every shrub, and from the warm, silent fields.

"This is joy, this is joy," she sang softly, half dancing along the footpath.

In her white dress, with her long braid of dark hair swinging back and forth as she danced, she went along like some young creature created by the summer night, and which would vanish with the morning. Straight on to the old house she went, her "house of dreams."

"I can look at it, if I can't live in it," she thought, with a new consciousness that in days to come she would recall this summer night, and she resolved that it should be a memory of pure delight. She passed along in the shadow of the hedge; she would enter the garden, perhaps even go to the brook.

She assured herself that the owner of the house would be asleep. No human being would ever know of this visit, and it would be something to add to her short list of shining adventures. She went slowly up the grass path, and turned toward the brook.

At the sight of a white figure moving across his garden, Wright had started up from his seat in the deep shadow of the porch. He had worked late, and, extinguishing his light, had stepped out for a

breath of cool air, lingering to enjoy the moonlight and the dim beauty of the garden.

"It's the girl," he whispered. "Can she be walking in her sleep?" he wondered a little fearfully, and with noiseless steps he ran along the grass, keeping well in the shadow, but almost within arms' reach of her.

The brook was a line of silver between misty banks. Rosalind knelt down and drew up a handful of the forget-me-nots.

"I can't bear to give it all up; never to see it again on summer mornings and moonlight nights," she said softly, but Wright was so near that he heard each word.

He crept back to the house as noiselessly as he had come, and in the shadow of the porch he stood waiting until the white figure came back along the grass path and vanished in the deepening shadows of the night.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

THE year in the old house had changed Wright Peters from a shy, clever boy, with his head full of possible conquerors of the air, to an alert, confident man. His father had, perhaps, foreseen the possibility of this evolution; and had known that his younger son needed the spur of necessity.

In his few past encounters with the social side of life Wright had been amused by the pretensions of the so-called "society" women, and bored by girls with their assumption of worldly knowledge, or of an angelic simplicity, according to their type. Of course there had always been Beryl, with her clear eyes, and ready smile over his youthful worries. But her attitude toward him of an elder sister had never varied; he wished he could tell her about this unknown girl who had taken possession of his house, driven him from his own kitchen, and now came back to mourn her exclusion from his garden.

"I suppose this is what a novelist calls 'romance,'" he said aloud, half-defiantly as he closed the outer door and went up to his room. "Well, whatever it

is, the 'dark Rosalind' can have this house and garden whenever she wants it," and with no thought of the plans and hopes of perfecting his cherished airplane, he lay long awake wondering in what manner he could speak to her, become her friend, her lover.

Of course it was possible to go straight to Mrs. Spencer's door, and ask to see Miss Allan. But what could he say when he did see her? Should he ask her if she had seen a cigarette-case which he had left behind him last summer? No. That would not do. Perhaps he could bring his plane down in the Spencer yard as if by accident, and trust to good luck that Rosalind would come out to wonder and question. No! He would trust nothing to chance. If there were no other way he would go straight to the Spencer's door and ask for her. He would tell her who he was, all about himself, and that he had fallen in love with her. Firmly fixed in this resolve he went to sleep.

Orrin was amazed the next morning to find that his "Boss" was not up until long after the usual hour. He watched Wright a little anxiously, wondering if he might not be ill.

"Bet he'll get another tumble today. He ain't more'n half awake yet; and he ain't well over that last spill either," muttered the boy as he watched Wright going toward the hangars. But Wright

turned into the road; and Orrin, a little more hopeful for his safety, lifted his voice in song and turned back to his work.

Mrs. Spencer's front door stood wide open when Wright reached the house. He rapped loudly, and in a moment Mrs. Spencer, tightening her apron strings as she came, appeared in the entry-way. The young man, gripping his old straw hat in both hands, wasted no time in vain ceremony.

"May I see Miss Rosalind Allan?" he asked.

"She's gone off for all day," responded Mrs. Spencer amiably, "taken her luncheon. She went yesterday, and like as not she'll go to-morrow."

Then she remembered that Rosalind and the Peters were alike residents of Boston. Neighbors, like as not, and she added: "She headed off toward the pine woods."

"Thank you," said Wright, with the consciousness that he had not the courage for another word.

It was all very well to call at a door and ask to see Rosalind, but to follow her to a distant hill was another and a different matter. He went slowly, back to his workshop. Orrin had been to the post-office, and there were several letters. One from Beryl's father. Wright read this letter with amazement; it warned him briefly that he should take some means to prevent Walter from wasting the Peters' money, and advised Wright not to sign any

paper sent him by his brother without the advice of a competent lawyer. The letter did not greatly trouble him. He had learned to depend on himself. But he was amused that anyone could really believe that his brother Walter would waste money. Walter, who so carefully counted his pennies! Wright doubted, as well, that Walter had power to make any use of their father's property until the time specified in the will for its distribution. The Peters' fortune, however, seemed a small matter to Wright just then. But Mr. Mason's letter made Wright remember the terms of his father's will; the complete trust it had expressed in Walter's ability, and distrust of the younger son's competence. It would be rather amusing, he thought, if, after all, Walter turned out a waster and managed to make way with the Peters' fortune. He said to himself that he would not lift a finger to stop him.

"But I'll not sign any papers, and appear a fool, to help him along in such a deal," he resolved, tearing open another letter.

As he read his face brightened. This letter was from a firm of motor manufacturers. They wrote offering him a salary such as Wright had never dared hope to earn, but with the condition that all his inventions and patents should become their property. Wright shook his head as he finished the letter.

"Not good enough," he said aloud, as he sat down on the workbench facing the open door.

Orrin was busy at the other end of the shop, and at the sound of Wright's voice he looked up from his work, wondering what "ailed the 'Boss.'" From where Wright sat he looked out across the sloping field toward the river. There was a drowsy hum of bees, hovering over the rose bushes; the quiet old house with its open windows and sheltering trees seemed to take possession of him as it had never done before. No wonder the girl loved it, he thought. How would she look? What would she say? when he told her, as he had resolved to do before nightfall, that the house and garden should be hers. And suddenly he laughed aloud, to Orrin's amazement. He had at last realized that the way to give his home into Rosalind's keeping was to ask her to marry him. At this decision Wright sprang up and started off across the field.

Orrin went to the door and looked after his employer a little anxiously.

"Maybe he's thinking out a new motor," the boy concluded. "Gee! wish I had brains like that."  
; "The pine woods. Mrs. Spencer had said the pine woods," he thought, crossing the field and following the river-bank for a short distance, and then turning into the pasture. Wright found that he had begun to hurry as if every moment counted.

Suppose he could not find her, he thought fearfully, what if he should never see her again?

He cleared the wall with an easy spring. On he raced up the slope among the trees, his feet making no sound on the heavy bed of soft pine needles. At last, out of breath, he stopped, flushed, hot and tired. He looked about eagerly, as if expecting to see Rosalind waiting for him.

"I am losing my wits," he muttered, and sat down, wiping his face and hands on his handkerchief, and endeavoring to regain his usual self-control. But he still had the feeling that he must not linger.

"Perhaps she is in some danger, hurt, drowning!" he thought, and now he turned to the right and raced down the slope toward the river. He called "Rosalind! Rosalind!" and suddenly, there she stood.

"What is it? What is it?" she called running toward him.

"You called? You were in danger?" he answered half questioningly.

"No, but I heard calls. It sounded like my own name. Perhaps some one is in the river and needs help."

For a second they both stood as if listening. Then Rosalind started forward.

"We had better go toward the river," she said, and Wright followed.

As they ran down the slope Wright noticed a



lunch basket and a book beneath a tall pine. Rosalind led the way to the little cove, and again they stood listening.

Wright was now breathing more evenly, and able to speak more clearly.

"It was all my imagination. I'm sure of it. I am sorry I frightened you," he managed to say.

"Oh, no. I heard calls too," Rosalind responded, "You must have run a long way," and she smiled as if they were friends.

"Do you suppose someone, perhaps some child, is in trouble?" she continued.

Wright shook his head.

"No, I am sure that I have frightened you needlessly," he answered.

But Rosalind insisted that she had heard someone call, and for a half-hour they went up and down the bank until she was convinced that it was useless to search further. Then they made their way back to the place where they had met. There was now a certain restraint between them. Each was recalling their first meeting in the kitchen of the old house a year ago; the discovery of each other in the theatre, and in Wright's mind was the picture of the night before, of the girl kneeling by the moon-silvered stream.

"You must be the owner of the old house," began Rosalind, "and I must tell you that last year I

moved in and took possession of it." And now she was no longer shy or troubled. She went on quickly, telling him the story of her great adventure. Unconsciously she was telling as well something of her own dull youth, and of all she had missed.

"And your cigarette-case is safe. You shall have it. But I have smoked three of the cigarettes," she concluded with a little laugh.

Wright smiled and nodded.

"And did you recognize me the night I sat near you in the theatre? I was almost tempted to tell you who I was that night, that you might know I was not a tramp," he answered.

"Yes, I knew you instantly," Rosalind answered. "Madam Ress, my best friend, was with me. She is in Europe now."

Then Wright told her the story of the old house, and something of his own youth; a none too happy boyhood, Rosalind decided. When he finished they smiled at each other in friendly fashion. The restraint was gone. Wright was eager to know more about her visit in his house. How had she managed to keep it a secret from the neighbors? And they laughed together about his appearance in the kitchen. Then Rosalind declared that it was lunch time, and that the basket held enough for them both, and together they ate the bread and butter and drank the cool milk.

"My first holiday since Christmas," said Wright, with a little sigh of satisfaction, as if the day had been worth waiting for.

Then naturally he told her of his work. Would she like to see how an aeroplane was made? How would she like to fly up the river a few miles some morning?

"Yes! and Yes!" she answered, with eager shining eyes.

Suddenly life had become a wonderful and beautiful adventure to these two young people. Rose was as interested to hear of Orrin and the workshop as if she had helped to plan the whole affair, and Wright urged her to come and visit the garden with him, when, late in the afternoon they walked slowly across the pasture. They went over the same way which Wright had traversed a few hours earlier, and up the grass path to the kitchen door.

"Such a time as I had to cut this path last year," laughed Rose.

From the shop window Orrin, with startled and resentful eyes watched his "Boss" and "Mrs. Spencer's boarder."

"Huh! Talking an' laughin' with a girl," he muttered scornfully. But he forgave Wright this human failing when Rosalind came into the shop and was so evidently impressed with all she saw. And when she told Orrin that she supposed he meant to

be an aviator, he decided that it was a good plan for Mr. Peters to bring a visitor to the shop now and then. It was supper time when Rose, a radiant and smiling Rose, returned to Mrs. Spencer's.

"Wright Peters called to see you," said Mrs. Spencer, meeting the girl at the door. "To think of you not letting on that you were acquainted! But law sakes, I guess I didn't give you a chance."

Rose nodded smilingly. Acquainted with Wright Peters! Why, it seemed as if she must always have known him. But she made no explanations as she followed Mrs. Spencer into the kitchen.

"I didn't say nothin' to the Lelands about it," continued Mrs. Spencer. "An' I guess I won't. She's full too eager with questions to suit me."

Rosalind laughed. It seemed of no importance as to whether Mrs. Leland knew or not of Wright's call. Then suddenly she realized that Wright had not spoken of calling. It was queer. But never mind. He would be sure to tell her sometime.

"I'm going to have griddle-cakes and honey for supper," continued Mrs. Spencer, "An' you jest watch an' see how Mrs. Leland begins talkin' about how bad it is for anybody's health to eat anything fried, an' then you take notice how she splashes butter over her cakes. Land, I ought to be 'shamed talkin' about her ways, but she does try me. Well, I won't say a word more," and Mrs. Spencer's

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capable hands reached for her trustworthy apron strings.

Rosalind ran up the stairs and into her room. She went straight to the small mirror, and eyed her reflection a little anxiously. Then she turned to the window and for a moment stood looking out over the fields.

## CHAPTER NINE

IT had been arranged that Rosalind would come to the work-shop at an early hour on the next morning after her meeting with Wright, prepared for a brief flight up the river, and she appeared in Mrs. Spencer's kitchen almost as soon as that good woman herself.

"Now, don't you hurry off this morning," pleaded Mrs. Spencer. "I've got news to tell, and I didn't get a chance to speak to you last night. My! I never did see anybody pick up the way you do. Only been here two days, and your cheeks as rosy and your eyes as bright as if you'd never seen a city. What do you s'pose my news is? Well, there's a new boarder coming. A friend of Mr. Leland's. A young man!" and Mrs. Spencer nodded and smiled as if this was news indeed.

"What's his name?" Rose questioned dutifully. A friend of Mr. Leland's, she thought, could easily be accounted for.

"His name is Storch," responded Mrs. Spencer a little regretfully. It wasn't a very attractive

name, she acknowledged to herself, but who can chose their name, or the length of their years?

"It is to be hoped that he doesn't look it," said Rose laughingly, "and now, Mrs. Spencer, I am going to tell you the most wonderful thing. I am going up in the plane this morning with Mr. Peters."

"My land!" Mrs. Spencer looked at Rosalind as if she could hardly credit her own ears. "I don't know as I ought to let you," she added, in so solemn a voice that Rosalind hastened to explain that it would be a very short flight, with no attempt to change "the plane into a boat." But Mrs. Spencer was evidently troubled over the adventure.

"I shan't have a clear mind 'till I see you safe home," she said, "and I wouldn't have the Lelands know it for anything. Now, don't you let on a word to them." Rose was quite ready to promise this, and she hurried away, turning at the gate to wave her hand to Mrs. Spencer who stood in the door looking after her as if for the last time.

It was much cooler than on the previous morning. An east wind came across the fields, now and then bringing a flavor of the marshes and the sea. There were small threatening clouds in the direction of the river, and Rose watched these a little fearfully. What if it should rain? It seemed to her that she could not bear a day's postponement of the promised pleasure.

Wright had walked down the road to meet her. He had been half-fearful that she might not come.

"It isn't going to rain is it?" she questioned, as they crossed the garden and approached the hangars where the plane awaited them. Orrin eyed Rosalind sharply. He was a little envious of this privilege of flying with Wright; but he decided that probably it would never happen again, and that perhaps the "Boss" couldn't help himself. Orrin watched the plane as it rose smoothly and floated off with a steady, even motion which gave him a new sense of pride in the consciousness that he had helped to construct so wonderful a machine.

At first Wright's entire interest was centered in the plane, but as they soared over the pines he turned toward his companion with a smile of perfect satisfaction. "Great, isn't it?" he said, and Rosalind nodded in response with a face of such delight that Wright glowed with pleasure. Life was wonderful, after all. Beautiful and wonderful almost beyond belief, thought Rosalind. And Wright, too, realized that this day was giving him all the kingdoms of the earth and sky. He was conscious of a vague pity for Walter, cooped up in a city with nothing to do but spend money.

They followed the twisting river, flying over the tall elms and white farm houses, and now and then dropping low enough to see the men in the fields,



who stopped their work to gaze up wonderingly at the swift moving plane; then up higher and higher in a long sweeping flight through the air.

"Home," said Wright briefly, as he brought the plane about, and now Rosalind watched for the grey roof and sheltering elms. The plane settled down easily at the exact point from which they had started, and where Orrin was waiting for them. Rosalind could hardly believe that only forty minutes had passed since they had left the earth. It had been the greatest experience of her life. In spite of Wright's entreaties that she should come in to the house for a cup of coffee, she hurried away. But not until it had been agreed that on the next day they should take a longer flight.

"Why not go down to the sea and have our luncheon at a little island I know?" suggested Wright, recalling a narrow little island near the coast which he had visited in one of his longer flights.

Rose agreed eagerly. She was already planning to give the remainder of the day to making some sort of costume that would be more suitable for an aeroplane than the skirt she was now wearing.

"What's happened?" Mrs. Spencer asked, looking at Rosalind half fearfully as she appeared at the kitchen door, "Or didn't you go after all?"

"Yes, indeed! Miles and miles," responded Rosa-

lind. "I never realized that such a marvellous thing as really flying could happen to anyone."

"Well, I am glad and thankful that you are safe home again," said Mrs. Spencer. "I don't know as there is much harm in flying," she added thoughtfully. "I guess it's like a good many other things that seem out of all reason just because we don't happen to see 'em. I s'pose there was a time when folks kind of laughed at steam engines."

Rosalind was standing near the kitchen window. The little clouds of the early morning, which had disappeared for a time, were now gathering again, swift, misty veils swept over the sun, and now and then there were little spits of rain.

"You got home just in time," said Mrs. Spencer. "It's set in for a rainy day, or I miss my guess. I'll carry a basket of wood into the sitting-room so's Mrs. Leland can have a fire. They're expecting Mr. Storch any minute. He's coming in an automobile."

"Yes?" responded Rosalind a little vaguely for her thoughts were centered on the probable amount of material in her old serge skirt, and if it would prove sufficient to make the desired knickerbockers. Her old long coat would do well enough to wear over them, she decided. She wondered if she could finish the knickerbockers so that she could wear them the next day? And without waiting for Mrs. Spencer's return to the kitchen, she hurried

to her own room. All that morning Rose basted and cut and stitched, not leaving her work until the bell rang for dinner.

"I declare! This is a surprise, for you to be in to dinner!" exclaimed Mrs. Leland, as Rose took her place at the table. "Too bad the new boarder isn't here to appreciate the compliment. But we feel sure he will arrive by supper time," and she nodded and simpered, as if she quite understood how natural it was for Rosalind to wish to meet a young man who was traveling in his own car, which she hastened to describe as one of the "best make." She went on to say that Mr. Storch was a business friend of Mr. Leland's. She had never met him. But it was very flattering that he should want to come to this out-of-the-way place just because they happened to be staying there.

Rosalind smiled a little vaguely.

"Rather a bad day to be traveling by auto, isn't it?" she said, glancing toward the window, against which the rain was now splashing vigorously. "Perhaps the storm will delay him."

Mrs. Leland did not think that the storm would last long, and Rosalind brightened so noticeably at this remark that Mrs. Leland had great reason to believe that her surmises were correct; that Miss Allan had stayed at home on purpose to make the acquaintance of Mr. Storch. Rain had not kept

the girl at home last summer, she recalled. Mrs. Leland began to realize that as the wife of a friend of Mr. Storch's, she owed it to him to lose no time in informing him that Miss Allan belonged to the working class. She had met German gentlemen before, and she knew how important such matters were in their estimation.

By the middle of the afternoon the rain stopped, the clouds vanished, and Rosalind gave a long breath of satisfaction as she set the last stitch in the serge knickerbockers. A rap at the door made her throw them quickly into the closet. They could not easily be explained to Mrs. Leland, and Rose had not yet decided to tell Mrs. Spencer of this second flight.

Mrs. Spencer opened the door. "You ain't sick, are you?" she questioned anxiously.

"Oh, no. I have been sewing," Rose answered.

"He's come, the boarder"; said Mrs. Spencer. "He wants to keep his auto in our shed, but he ain't pleased with the shed door. He spoke his real thoughts in German, but I knew he wa'n't pleased. I s'pose that's why people learn German so's to kinder let themselves go once in awhile without other folks realizing the kind of language they really are using. I'm 'most afraid he won't like the food"; and Mrs. Spencer sighed as if a new and unnecessary burden awaited her.

"If he finds fault it will be because he is unreasonable," declared Rosalind.

"Well, maybe; but he's 'most too fat not to be fussy about his eating. You can judge for yourself come supper time," and Mrs. Spencer, tightening her apron strings as she went, departed.

Rosalind quickly decided not to tell Mrs. Spencer about the next day's excursion. She would start out as usual the next morning, carrying her coat with the knickers pinned inside, and on reaching the Peters' house she could easily change. As she busied herself in preparations for the next day's excursion she wondered a little about this new inmate of Mrs. Spencer's house. A stout, fussy young man named Storch, a friend of the Lelands, did not promise any great interest to days now so filled with delight.

Rosalind went down to supper wearing a simple dress of white. Mrs. Leland did not fail to note that Rosalind was looking her best, and, after the manner of her kind, ascribed it to a desire to please the eyes of the new arrival. Mrs. Leland felt properly amused, and superior, remembering that her husband had said that the young man's name was really Von Storch, but that he did not always add the "Von." She was quite sure that a Von Storch would only need to be told that a young woman earned her own livelihood to form a proper

opinion of white linen gowns and dark shining hair.

Contrary to the fears of Mrs. Spencer, Mr. Storch seemed pleased with his supper. To be sure his table manners left something to be desired. He carefully selected the largest and best helpings of chicken, and was not ashamed to reach across the table, even when it was necessary for him to stand in order to achieve the distance. He wasted no time in making the acquaintance of Mrs. Leland. He regarded Rosalind with approving eyes, and, after asking her if she liked the country, said that she must be his guide about the neighborhood during his stay.

"How long a vacation can you take from your work this year, Miss Allan?" Mrs. Leland found an opportunity to ask, and Rosalind's answer that it was rather uncertain, possibly a month, convinced Mrs. Leland that the girl was even bolder than she had imagined. A month! When last year she had stayed only two weeks. Of course it was plain enough to Mrs. Leland why she meant to stay. She resolved to let Mr. Storch see that Rosalind was a designing girl.

Mr. Von Storch was not a silent man. He spoke the English language with a correctness and fluency such as few Americans ever attain. He had a good deal to say of his unfailing success in business. He said that his firm relied on him to discover just

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what was being invented in the way of new propellers for air ships, new motors, and he was now on the track of a man named Peters, who lived in Riverdale, or River Junction.

"I recalled at once, my good Leland," said Mr. Storch, "that you were in Maine. I look up Riverdale, and find it next to the village where this Peters lives. I decide to run down and see how you pass your time. I discover the inventor." And Storch nodded and smiled over his great cleverness.

Rosalind noticed that Mr. Leland's face had flushed with anger at the "my good Leland" of this condescending young German. He did not relish being made use of to further Mr. Storch's success. But, quite unconscious of offending, Mr. Storch gabbled happily on of his intention to visit this country inventor and see if he had anything worthy of his attention.

Rosalind listened to his conversation with a flattering interest.

## CHAPTER TEN

**W**ELL, I do wish Miss Allan could see him all dressed up as he is this morning," reflected Mrs. Spencer, as she returned to the kitchen after serving breakfast to the other boarders.

Mrs. Spencer was thinking of Mr. Storch, who had come down to breakfast in an immaculate suit of white flannel. His shirt was of white silk, and his tie a delicate blue. If he had been cast as the blonde hero of a summer romance he could not have stepped upon the stage more correctly attired.

"'T ain't none of my business, of course," Mrs. Spencer confided to the sleepy maltese cat curled up on the window sill, "but I could tell him it ain't no easy matter to get clothes washed here," and she suddenly recalled that Rosalind had started off that morning wearing a white duck skirt. "But as long as she took her old coat, maybe it won't matter," she decided.

The morning was very warm. Mrs. Leland was hopefully expectant that Mr. Storch would suggest that she and Mr. Leland should accompany him on



a long ride. But before she had finished her breakfast she realized that he had no such pleasing intention.

"Miss Allan, she sleeps late," he had asserted when Rosalind failed to appear.

"Oh, no, but Miss Allan never takes breakfast with us. She prefers the kitchen," said Mrs. Leland.

"So? Because she sleeps so late," responded Mr. Storch with confidence.

"Not at all. She gets up very early, and eats in the kitchen, and then starts off on long tramps. But I expected she would take breakfast with us this morning," and Mrs. Leland smiled upon Mr. Storch, quite sure that he would instantly comprehend her slight emphasis on "this," and what she termed the "delicate flattery" of her suggestion.

There was no doubt but that Mr. Storch understood. He regarded Mrs. Leland with a new interest, and nodded smilingly.

"But when will the young lady return?" he asked, wishing that he had not been in such a hurry to wear his immaculate suit. He would have to change it, if the girl was not coming home promptly.

Mrs. Leland shook her head as if his question was beyond all human wisdom.

"All we know is that every day last summer, no matter what the weather, she started off with a box

of luncheon, and often we didn't see her for days at a time."

Mr. Storch asked no more questions. American girls were never brought up properly, as he knew. If this one did queer things it was of no importance to him. He lost no time in changing into a shabby suit of greenish wool, and made his way to the shed, where he worked over his car for the greater part of the morning. Toward noon, directed by Mrs. Spencer, he started off toward the old Wright house.

Rosalind had taken her lunch basket as usual that morning, and with the old blue ulster over her arm started off without a word to Mrs. Spencer in regard to the wonderful day of adventure before her. She had wished that she might have taken an extra amount of food, but she could not give any convincing reason for such a request, and she was somehow sure that Wright would be equal to any emergency.

"I want to change my dress for my aviation uniform," she said frankly, when Wright came across the garden to meet her.

"Your own room is at your disposal," Wright answered. "You used the room over the kitchen, didn't you?"

"Yes. But what did I leave behind that told the story?" she asked.

"I don't know. I haven't been in the room. But I was sure it was yours," Wright responded.

Rosalind knew that her face flushed crimson, she asked no more questions, but turned toward the house.

"I'll be at the hangars when you are ready," said Wright, and Rosalind entered the kitchen to find Orrin polishing the stove industriously. Rosalind had a moment's temptation to tell the boy of her own methods in regard to that stove, but she refrained, with great wisdom, and explained that Mr. Peters had given her permission to go to the room over the kitchen to put on her "uniform."

"Sure," Orrin responded, hastening to open the door to the stairway.

A year ago and Orrin would have felt that he was disgraced for life if he had been discovered in a kitchen, wearing an apron, and doing housework, which was considered by the men and boys of the neighborhood to be so menial and degrading an occupation as to be only fit for their mothers, wives or sisters. Not even in the emergency of the illness of the women of the family did the "men folks" of that region discover any necessity to cook, clean or be of any service in the daily work of the house. No, indeed! They were cheerfully willing to hitch up a team and drive any distance, in any direction where it was pointed out to them that a woman's

help could be secured, and bring her home in triumph, to be commended by all the neighborhood as a kind and loving son or father, and a "good provider."

But the year with Wright Peters had taught Orrin many things, and chief among them was the fact that the man who could look after his own wants in every way was the most valuable man. Wright's amused scorn at Orrin's former reluctance to do household work had its due effect. "You wouldn't make much of an explorer or aviator, if you expected to have all the unpleasant things done for you," he had remarked.

At another time Wright had mentioned that the only difference between a savage and a civilized man was the fact that the civilized man knew how to do useful work, and the savage did not. So, gradually, Orrin had ventured to bake potatoes, cook eggs and make coffee, and, by asking help from his mother on his visits home, had learned to cook. He was now rather proud of his household accomplishments, and looked forward to a future where camp life would have no discomforts for him.

Rosalind ran upstairs and opened the door to her room. She slipped off the white duck skirt, and with the high boots, knickerbockers, and the long coat, felt that she was quite ready.

Orrin was waiting to escort her across the field. He had apparently accepted Rosalind, as he would

any person or article that the "boss" might decide upon as desirable.

The sky was clear as a bell. There was no breeze, but the air was still fresh from the rain of the previous day. Orrin stood watching the plane as Wright shaped its course down the river. Then he turned back to the shop, not ill-pleased to be left in authority for the day.

However successful Wright's invention might prove, and he had evidence to establish its worth, Orrin was surely one of his important discoveries. From a stodgy, indolent boy whose greatest ambition had been to secure a "soft snap," he was developing into an alert, ambitious youth, whose mind reached beyond the joys of "motion pictures" to the possibilities of great engineering feats, explorations, and endless accomplishments in aviation.

Wright had talked freely to the boy. Telling him of the use to which such a plane as his could be put in battle, and of the strength and power of a nation that, with an army of planes, could prevent the ships and armies of any foe from even attempting an attack.

"But there ain't any wars nowadays," Orrin had responded a little regretfully, visioning himself as an aviator in charge of the defence of his country.

"That's like a good many other things which might happen," Wright had answered. "There is

an old saying about not crossing bridges until you come to them, but it's a good plan to be able to swim if there doesn't happen to be a bridge."

Orrin thought over Wright's words and sug-gestions that morning as he busied himself in the shop. He whistled as he worked, and Mr. Storch had reached the shop door before Orrin suspected a visitor.

Mr. Storch was very warm after his walk; the distance had been much longer than he had expected. He had stopped and looked at the old house, glanced at the garden, and with a little exclamation of scorn, had observed that the "work shop" was only a roughly built shed.

Orrin stared in surprise as he saw the stranger in the doorway.

"Well? And is this the shop of Mr. Wright Peters?" asked Mr. Storch, his eyes travelling swiftly from forge to work-bench, and noting a number of models and patterns on the long shelf at the end of the room.

Orrin came quickly forward.

"Want to see Mr. Peters?" he asked, blocking the man's progress without apparent intention.

"Yes. Is this where he works?"

"He's away today; and he don't let folks come in here. Anyway, he don't let me let anyone in," said Orrin, wondering who this man could be, and how he had reached the shop.

"So?" and Mr. Storch smiled amiably, and jingled a handful of loose coins in his pocket, "but as Mr. Peters is away I suppose I can come in."

Orrin had moved a little nearer the door and was now so close that Mr. Storch found that he could not advance without pushing the boy out of his way. He was quite ready to do that if it proved necessary, but he was sure that he knew an easier way. He remembered that Americans realized the usefulness of money nearly as much as Germans themselves, so his hand was extended toward Orrin displaying two bright silver quarters.

"Shall we call this admission money?" he asked, making an effort not to show how angry he really was.

Orrin regarded the man with open scorn.

"I don't want your money. And I don't know as I want you 'round here anyway," he said sharply. "He's too fat." he thought. "I ain't afraid of him. Bet I could push him over if he tried to be smart with me."

Mr. Storch stood silent for a moment. He realized that in some way he had made a mistake. He decided that it would have been better to have frightened the boy. That was the way to deal with people. Let them see that you were dangerous.

"You have made a great mistake. I came here to look at Mr. Peters' inventions, and to purchase

whatever seemed worth while," said Mr. Storch, stepping forward with an appearance of perfect courage.

For a moment Orrin hesitated. He knew that Wright hoped to sell his motor, and another invention on which he was at work. Suppose that he, Orrin, had lost the "boss" a chance to make good? Then suddenly he recalled Wright's orders, often repeated. "Remember, no one, boy or man, is to enter this shop without my knowledge," and Orrin hesitated no longer.

"You will have to come tomorrow if you want to see Mr. Peters," he said, almost pushing the visitor from the door. In an instant Storch had grabbed Orrin by both hands and with an ugly twist had swung him out of his way, but before he could take another step Orrin had sprung at him, head down he drove into Mr. Storch's ample stomach with so much force that the stout man went over like a ball, and for a moment lay gasping and cursing.

Orrin stood in the shop door, his breath came quickly, and his fists were clenched. He made up his mind that he would die before he would let that fellow cross the threshold.

Mr. Storch got slowly to his feet. With an ugly curse at Orrin and a promise to punish him at no late day, Mr. Storch went slowly back the



way he had come. "That boy should be made to suffer," he vowed, as he walked back over the dusty road.

Orrin stood in the shop door until the man was out of sight.

"Ought to have a dog here. Yes sir, sure thing," he muttered, as he went toward the pump and washed his hands vigorously. "The mean sneak! Offering me money." But Orrin wondered just what the "boss" would say when he heard the story.

"Bet I could hunt up a smart puppy if the boss says so. I'd like to train him. Bet no fat-faced money-bag would give me much back talk with a smart pup all ready for him," and Orrin smiled broadly as he recalled the picture of Mr. Storch doubled up by his unexpected assault. He began to feel rather well pleased with himself, and his thoughts travelled hopefully in the direction of his old employer, Mr. Holden, who could always inform a would-be purchaser where a promising young dog could be found. This prospect engaged his thoughts so pleasantly that he nearly forgot Mr. Storch.

The plane floated smoothly along. At the distance of a few hundred feet above the river the air was deliciously cool. Rosalind had never experienced such perfect delight as she was now conscious of. The soft air rushed past her filled with the vague

fragrances of summer fields, and then suddenly the sea, a long line of blue and silver, glimmered as far as she could see.

Wright brought the plane about in a long swallow-like curve, and they sailed along over the rough, broken shore. Over small groups of summer cottages perched here and there in smooth fields, or on the edge of some steep cliff. Over long box-like hotels, and then dark woods of spruce and fir trees. Then, with another turn, the plane floated across a narrow inlet and came easily down to land in an open space, circled by wind-swept trees. The landing was made with such skill that Rosalind stepped out as if descending from a low-hung carriage.

"Look about for a good place to lunch, will you?" Wright suggested, as he anchored the plane and carefully looked over his machine. "You can't get lost," he added. "This is an island, and not more than half-a-mile wide."

"I feel as if I had discovered it," Rose exclaimed. "Does the further side face the open sea? And if it does couldn't we have luncheon there?"

"It does, and we can. But it is only ten o'clock now, so we will have time to catch a few tom-cods off the rocks, and I can dig some clams," replied Wright, his face aglow with satisfaction. To have a companion such as Rosalind, to have his plane flying like an angel, and a perfect summer day to

enjoy these delights, seemed an undreamed of good fortune.

"Splendid," said Rosalind starting off toward the outer shore.

Beyond the circle of rough trees lay the shore facing the open sea. A small cove, sheltered between two brown ledges, covered with clinging seaweed, seemed a good place for luncheon; and after climbing about over the ledges, with a new sense of freedom and pleasure, Rosalind turned back to find Wright just leaving the plane.

"It's all right," he said. "The motor is working perfectly. Come and take a look at it."

Rosalind was eager to know about the plane, and followed Wright's explanations with such interest that he declared smilingly, "I am sure you could soon learn to run the plane. I will give you a lesson or two and then you can drive yourself."

Taking Rosalind's lunch basket and a small box that Wright had taken from the plane, they started toward the cove, which Rosalind had described as being just suited for picknickers.

"The tide is pretty well out now, and I am sure I can dig some first class clams on the inside shore," said Wright. "I have brought some lines and these ledges are the very place to fish for tom-cod."

In a short time Rosalind found herself established on the highest point of the ledge, dangling a line

baited with a bit of salt pork. Wright stood by her side until she had pulled in a couple of plump, struggling fish.

"These will do, with steamed clams, for our fish course," he said, wrapping them in rockweed. "You might gather up some dry wood, while I go clamming," he added, as they returned to the cove.

By the time Rosalind had gathered a good sized heap of broken branches, driftwood and dry seaweed, Wright was back with a small bag filled with clams. Rosalind watched him dig a hole in the sand, fill it with rockweed, put in the clams, and then cover them carefully with rockweed and sand, and build a fire over them.

"Now I will show you the only perfect way to cook a fish," said Wright, as he carefully selected some long bits of wood which he whittled to sharp points. "As soon as there is a good bed of coals I'll broil the fish," he explained.

Rosalind took the lunch basket and package to a smooth, flat rock large enough for a good sized table, and spread the contents of the basket. Wright's package contained a thermos bottle filled with excellent lemonade, a package of crackers, and a tiny bag of salt. He had evidently planned on securing the clams and fish.

She watched him as he held the fish over the coals on the pointed sticks, and then hurried toward the

"lunch table" that she might taste them before they lost a bit of their sweetness.

When at last they faced each other across the smooth rock they both smiled with delight. The splash of the tide against the rocks, the cool little air from the sea, the aromatic odours of the fir and spruce trees, surrounded them with all the sweetness of youth and summer. The appetizing food gave them an added satisfaction, but above all was the fact that they were together, and as apart from the rest of the world as if they had flown to some distant star. It seemed to Wright that all his hopes were coming true. This girl, who had walked into his house and heart, already filled his dreams. He said to himself that he was sure that she understood, that she knew they loved each other. "No need for a lot of talk about it," he assured himself, as he took out the cigarette-case which Rosalind had returned to him on the previous day, and with a little smile, held it toward her.

"Shall I?" she asked.

"Of course," he answered. "It's the perfect end of a happy lunch."

"Every day grows more wonderful," said Rose, looking dreamily off across the sea, "and last year I was sure that nothing more beautiful than staying in your old house could ever happen to me, and now —"

She was leaning against the brown ledge, and Wright's eyes rested upon her with a sense of tender protection. This was their first meal together. He knew that it would always be one of his dearest memories.

"And now?" he questioned, as she left her sentence unfinished.

"Why now, desert islands and air ships, and great adventures," she answered laughingly.

"And me. Don't forget me," responded Wright with his ready smile.

"I don't. I never shall. How could I?" she answered soberly. "You see," she continued quickly, as if eager that he should understand, "I haven't had any friends except Madame Ress, and you have let me play in your garden, and —" she stopped suddenly, realizing that she had been on the point of telling him that he had brought joy, romance, love itself, into her life.

A little silence fell between them. Wright threw away his cigarette and rose to his feet. He reached down to help Rosalind, and as she put her hand in his he clasped it firmly and drew her up. There was no word between them as his arms went about her and his lips met hers.

"You know, don't you," he whispered, as he let her go, and Rosalind, her hand still fast in his, smiled back at him. He did not need for her to speak.

## CHAPTER ELEVEN

**R**OSALIND walked slowly home along the country road. The coat was heavy across her arm, the basket was a burden. It was late twilight, and her thoughts were full of Wright, and of the happiness the day had brought. The flight home in the late afternoon, and supper at the kitchen table in the old house, when he had allowed her to make the tea, and prepare the omelette, while Orrin looked on admiringly, all seemed like a part of a beautiful story to her. And now the day was over, and she was leaving it all behind. She thought of Wright's brown hands, their look of strength and ability; she recalled the firmness of their pressure. The little smile, which seemed ever to linger about his mouth, and the tender look in his blue eyes.

"And last year I thought a house and garden could bring me happiness," she whispered to herself. How would it be possible for her to return to Boston and leave him? "If he will only ask me to stay," she thought. There was no thought in her heart that did not center around Wright. If she could

live with him in the old house, if that could be their home, she would ask no happier lot.

The sharp toot of an auto horn broke into her dreams and made her jump quickly from the road into a tangle of weeds and tall grasses, and she looked up to see that the car was driven by Mr. Storch, with Mr. and Mrs. Leland occupying the back seat. The car stopped so suddenly that Mr. Storch's passengers lurched forward and nearly lost their balance.

"So, Miss Allan, you are not lost," called Mr. Storch, in what he imagined was a gay and attractive manner. He had not been feeling well since his encounter with Orrin; he had not enjoyed his food; but for the moment he forgot his injuries as he looked at Rosalind's radiant face, and swung open the door to the seat beside him.

"Oh, thank you, but I must go home," Rosalind answered. To ride over dusty roads with Mr. Storch and the Lelands after a flight through the wind-swept air with Wright Peters, was unbearable even to think of.

"We will take you home," declared Mr. Storch, and before Rosalind could say that she would rather walk, the car had swung around, and she was seated beside its driver.

Mrs. Leland had been so occupied with her hat and veil that she had only nodded to Rosalind.



It was very provoking, she thought, that her first ride should be spoiled by Miss Allan's unexpected appearance. She began to have an active dislike for the girl. She found a chance to whisper to her husband that evidently Mr. Storch had not understood about Miss Allan, and in response to his blank expression added, "That she is a working girl."

Mr. Leland's muttered "Bosh," was clear enough to the ears of affection; and Mrs. Leland realized her plain duty to speedily make Rosalind realize that the good things of the earth, as comprised by Mr. Storch and his automobile, and the feeble championship of Mr. Leland, were reserved for feminine women who were quite satisfied to let chivalrous men carry all the burdens of the world.

"But we are going by Mrs. Spencer's!" Rosalind exclaimed, as the car gained speed and whirled past the comfortable white house.

"Just a little spin," said Mr. Storch. He was again attired in the white flannel suit, and he could readily imagine with what emotions of awed delight and admiration this nobody of a girl must regard him. Mr. Storch did not lack imagination, although he would have sharply denied such a folly. He knew himself as a practical man, a man of action, who saw things exactly as they were. He often realized how fortunate it was that there were men like

himself in America; and he looked confidently forward to the day, which he knew was near at hand, when these English-speaking clowns would turn to him for help and counsel. Thoughts such as these reconciled Mr. Storch to the necessity of living away from Germany.

Rosalind realized that there was nothing to do but make the best of circumstances, and turned, with her pretty smile, to speak to Mrs. Leland.

"You don't often get such a treat as this, do you?" remarked Mrs. Leland, in what she believed to be a gracious and condescending manner, and which, after the manner of all condescension, was only out of place and ridiculous.

"This is my very first ride in an automobile," Rosalind responded.

Mrs. Leland smiled. So did Mr. Storch. He felt a stronger interest in this girl. "So?" he murmured, smiling at her approvingly. It was not often, he reflected, that you found an American girl who had not sampled all the diversions of life. How grateful this one would be for all the pleasure he so generously meant to make possible for her. Long rides in his delightful company, but not with the good Lelands. No, indeed!

For an hour Mr. Storch trundled his car over the dusty roads. He was enjoying the evening. As he gave Rosalind a pleasing account of his fortunate

experiences in business, of the clever way in which he had obtained the very car in which they were riding, without its costing him a penny, he nearly forgot his unpleasant experience of the early morning.

If Rosalind was rather silent she at least seemed appreciative. Mr. Storch said to himself that her manner was suitable and proper to a girl in her position. A girl who understood her place well enough to be silent when a man was willing to talk with her, had possibilities. Mr. Storch began to feel that a little well-merited diversion might help him through this dull business trip, and he turned a calculating and possessive eye upon Rosalind's dark hair and firm shoulders.

Mrs. Spencer stood in the kitchen door as the car entered the yard. "Now, ain't that complete?" she said to her husband. "I wonder if that young man is taking a fancy to Miss Allan? Well, he ain't just the one I should choose for her. But be that as it may, it's real pleasant to see them all friendly."

Rosalind did not linger in her good-nights. She was eager for the silence and safety of her own room. Before the Lelands and Mr. Storch came indoors she was fast asleep, her dreams filled with fragrance and joy and love.

She slept late the next morning, and when she came into the kitchen Mrs. Spencer smiled approv-

ingly. She was sitting in the open door shelling peas for dinner.

"Well, you've over-slept for once," she said, looking up with a friendly nod. "I'll make you some toast right off, the porridge is hot, and so's the coffee, and there's a saucer of strawberries."

"I'll make the toast," Rosalind responded quickly. "I don't know what made me sleep so late."

"According to my view it's what you ought to do every morning. Not but what early rising seems to agree with you," said Mrs. Spencer, looking up admiringly at Rosalind's glowing cheeks and happy eyes.

"I am going to stay at home this morning," said Rosalind, dishing out her porridge and sitting down at the end of the kitchen table.

"Perhaps I ought not to say so, but you seem 'most like my own folks, Miss Allan. I s'pose one reason is that you like me and my kitchen better than you do Mrs. Leland and the front porch," said Mrs. Spencer.

"Of course I do," responded Rosalind, "why, I never was so happy in all my life as I am this very minute. I wish I could live here all my life."

"I guess you wouldn't like it winters. It's dreadful cold, and roads all blocked up with snow, or so muddy that you can't step off your own doorstep. If it wa'n't for all I find to do I wouldn't

like it myself, come winter. To be sure, there's a kind of satisfaction you don't get in summer, in being shut in 'long towards night, with the sitting-room all to ourselves, and a good fire and the lamp lit, and the last week's 'Portland Transcript' to read," and Mrs. Spencer smiled happily, as if recalling past happiness, and looking forward to joys to come.

Instantly Rosalind's thoughts had sped to the old Wright house:—It was a winter's night, there was a blazing fire on the sitting-room hearth, and she, Rosalind, sat before it. She would look up to see Wright Peters smiling at her from the big chair opposite. Outside was the cold and the snow-blocked roads, but they two were shut in with warmth and firelight and love. Rosalind had forgotten her breakfast. She sat looking off through the open window, but seeing nothing of the summer fields.

Mrs. Spencer went on. "I always say to Simon that I guess I realize how much I think of him in winter more than I do in summer. He's apt to laugh at me because I'm always telling him that I count myself a lucky woman. And when he says he don't see how I make that out, when I work hard as I do, I have an answer ready for him. I say: 'Well, I'm lucky because I'm married to the man I set my heart on;' and he

can't say much against that, now can he?" and Mrs. Spencer laughed comfortably.

"Did you love him the first time you saw him?" Rosalind questioned.

"I guess I did. Anyway, 'twa'n't very long after he came from Portland to work for the Griffiths before I knew that it would be considerable hard for me if he passed me by," replied Mrs. Spencer. "But youth is a hard time for most of us," she continued thoughtfully, "it has to be lived through, but I ain't one of those as is always wishing it back. I am a good deal happier now than I was when I was young, and I have reason to be."

Mrs. Spencer was silent for a moment, then in a brisk voice she declared that the mess of peas she had gathered were going to fall short.

"I'll have to pick another basketfull, or our new boarder won't have as many as he'll want."

"Let me pick them. I haven't a thing to do this morning," said Rose.

"Well, you're real good, I'm sure. And I don't say but what 't would be a help. You just go through that little wicket gate at the end of the shed, and you'll be right in the garden. Don't pick only the pods that are well-filled out," cautioned Mrs. Spencer, and in a moment Rosalind was on her way across the yard.

As she opened the wicket gate some one called

her name, and she turned to find Mr. Storch close behind her.

"So, you are not off on a walk this morning? I am glad of that. I will take you for a long drive. Yes?" he announced rather than questioned. But Rose shook her head smilingly. "I cannot go. I must pick peas for your dinner," she responded.

Mr. Storch beamed approval.

"Perhaps your mother, or your grandmother, were German?" he questioned.

"No, all Scotch, until they became Americans," Rosalind answered.

Mr. Storch decided that he was not surprised. Nevertheless, the girl had many attractive qualities, she was evidently well-disposed toward him.

"Then we will go, after dinner. After I have eaten the excellent peas, we will take a ride."

"I can't go this afternoon," replied Rosalind, with something in her manner that Mr. Storch was quite sure meant disappointment in losing so great a pleasure.

"Perhaps you stay at home to make cakes for my supper?" said Mr. Storch amiably, coming so near that his shoulder touched Rosalind.

She swung back the gate and closed it behind her.

"Be sure and enjoy the peas," she called over her shoulder, and Mr. Storch turned back to the shed.

The girl seemed a little stupid, he thought, as he ran his car into the yard and started in the direction of the Peters house. Here it was the second day of their acquaintance, and while she wished, of course, to please him, she really did not seem to understand how well disposed he really was toward her. Perhaps, after all, an evening ride would be more pleasant. Mr. Storch decided that evening with moonlight and this pretty girl beside him in the car, would be an agreeable combination.

Then his mind turned toward the boy who had, as he termed it, assaulted him. Several possible ways of punishing Orrin occurred to him. One in particular seemed fitting. As he thought over how simple a thing it would be to give this young ruffian the punishment he merited Mr. Storch became well pleased with himself. He reflected cheerfully that no one but a German could decide these things with sufficient quickness. He was in very good spirits when he stopped his car near the entrance to Wright's garden.

"Say! Here comes that fellow that was here yesterday," exclaimed Orrin, running into the shop. He had told Wright of the encounter on the previous day, greatly to Wright's amusement. Wright had decided that it would be the wiser course not to refer to the matter, in case the visitor returned. Rosalind had described Mr. Storch, so that he was



quite sure that Orrin had been obliged to protect himself.

Wright was standing in the shop door as his visitor approached.

"Have I the pleasure of speaking to Mr. Wright Peters?" inquired Mr. Storch smiling and lifting his panama hat.

"You have," responded Wright, with his ready boyish smile.

"Permit me," and Mr. Storch proffered a large engraved card.

"Mr. Fritz William Von Storch." Wright read the name aloud.

"Will you not come to the house, Mr. Von Storch," suggested Wright, leading the way down the path, greatly to Orrin's delight, who stood near the door grinning offensively at the visitor.

Mr. Storch said nothing of his previous visit. He was sure that the boy would not dare to tell his employer that he had knocked down a possible purchaser, and his plan for Orrin's punishment would work out more successfully if he kept silent in regard to his dislike.

The interview with Wright did not turn out exactly as Mr. Storch had expected. He returned to Mrs. Spencer's in good season for dinner, but he was not in good humor. Peters had not seemed disposed to confide his plans to his visitor. He had

even said that he would not consider any offer for his motor or plane, until he had offered them to the War Department of the United States.

Mr. Storch had carefully explained to the young man that the United States was at peace with all the world, and that if any little dispute arose among European nations it would not concern the United States, not in the least.

Wright had agreed cheerfully, but his response troubled Mr. Storch, for Wright had said:

"Oh, well, if the United States doesn't want it, perhaps England will."

Finally, however, Wright had shown him a clever drawing of a device for mounting a gun on an airplane, which had stirred the German to enthusiasm.

"I haven't worked out the model yet," Wright had remarked, as if it was a matter of small account.

Mr. Storch had sufficiently forgotten himself to show an eager interest. He had even offered to pay a thousand dollars for the drawing and a small working model. For he had instantly resolved that this invention should be known as the "Von Storch" gun-lift. He would present it to the All-Highest, as his own invention. With inward delight he recalled that it was the psychological moment for such a gift. But Wright had not seemed impressed with his offer, and the question was not

settled. So, on the whole, Mr. Storch was not in a pleasant frame of mind as he sat down at Mrs. Spencer's dinner table. He was convinced that young Peters' workshop contained valuable material which he, Von Storch, could make excellent use of, but it was not so simple a matter to get at it as he had expected. Again he cursed the stupidity of Americans, who were not always ready to listen to established wisdom.

Mr. Storch helped himself to the greater portion of the peas with a gloomy countenance. For the moment he forgot to admire Rosalind, who, facing Mrs. Leland, and with Mr. Storch at her right hand, was thinking the present experience was one that she could easily avoid in future by sharing the Spencers' mid-day meal in the kitchen.

Mrs. Leland ventured to be openly scornful toward the girl.

"I suppose we can thank Mr. Storch for your company nowadays, Miss Allan. We never had the pleasure before his arrival," she said; and Rosalind, amused at the suggestion, had laughed, and responded that she hoped Mr. Storch appreciated the compliment.

"Quite as if she felt herself as good as anybody," thought Mrs. Leland angrily.

For a moment Mr. Storch forgot the gun-lift. He beamed upon Rosalind, and glanced inquiringly

at the large piece of strawberry short-cake that Mrs. Spencer had placed before him.

"Perhaps you made this cake?" he questioned, nodding toward Rosalind. "It is a cake, yes," he continued not waiting for her to reply, "but not such a cake as I get when I visit Milwaukee." Mr. Storch sighed, as he tasted the cake, and then continued: "Milwaukee is the finest city in America! It is almost as good as some of our small German towns."

"I wonder if Miss Allan cooks," said Mrs. Leland. "Of course, for a certain class, it is a useful thing to know, but it has never been necessary for me to learn," and Mrs. Leland was sure that now Mr. Storch would realize the difference between a lady and a working girl.

But Mr. Storch fixed his eyes upon her in open disapproval.

"Not cook!" he exclaimed, as if she had confessed an unforgivable offence. "I wonder you ever found a man who would marry you. You should see how all the women in Germany cook!" and he lifted his eyes as if regarding a holy emblem.

Mrs. Leland had no further appetite for the excellent short-cake. Her face grew spotted with anger. Like Cinderella's step-mother, she did not like people who disagreed with her. Careless of his offence, Mr. Storch talked on of the delights of

German cookery, the admirable manner of household arrangements in Germany, and, above all, of the industry and obedience of German women.

Rosalind was glad to slip away before the others had finished.

Mrs. Spencer's face was a little troubled as she cleared away the dishes that noon.

"I don't like the way Mr. Storch talks," she remarked to her husband, who was sitting on the door-step taking his noon-time rest. "He seems to be doing real well in his business, but he's dreadful ready to find fault with the way the people manage things in this country."

"I don't blame him, not a mite. This country is a goin' to the dogs," declared Mr. Spencer fiercely. "'Fer as I can see all our young men mean to do is to run automobiles. And all that the young women are planning on, is to find some feller fool enough to marry 'em. This Mr. Storch knows what he is talking about."

"My land, Simon, if things have got to such a pass why don't you turn to and notify folks? I guess there's some spunk left in Americans yet," responded Mrs. Spencer.

But Simon shook his head.

"Look at all these summer hotels," he continued. "You know just as well as I do, that they're just a lot of play-houses fer idle and useless women.

If they'd turn to and use their time and money helpin' folks that needed help 'twould make a sight of difference in my opinion of 'em," and without waiting for Mrs. Spencer's indignant rejoinder, in defence of American women, Mr. Spencer started off to his work.

As she turned from the door she found Mr. Storch just entering the kitchen.

"What direction did Miss Allan go?" he asked.

"I ain't seen Miss Allan since dinner. I guess she's upstairs," replied Mrs. Spencer, a little flurried after her recent encounter in behalf of woman.

"So! Maybe she is resting," responded Mr. Storch, and with an amiable nod he departed.

Mr. Storch felt quite sure that in a short time Rosalind would appear on the front porch, and he was quite ready to be as agreeable and entertaining as possible. He resolved to tell her of a special cake which his Milwaukee friends made to perfection. He sauntered out to the porch. Mrs. Leland was there, established in the most comfortable chair. Mr. Storch frowned at her, and recalled the attractive conventions of home life in Germany, that made it imperative for a woman to give a man his rights in the way of comfortable chairs. These conventions, he reflected, twisting his short moustache into its proper upward spike, enveloped life gracefully, and gave some security of ease to a man.

But why expect anything of American women? All Europe knew that they were idle and silly, and Mr. Storch seated himself in the other chair, and proceeded to fill his large and expensive pipe. Miss Allan could sit on the step beside the good Leland, who had been silly enough to marry a woman who could not cook, and who was apparently a fool.

"You know this young Peters?" he suggested, turning toward Mrs. Leland with a sudden suspicion that Rosalind might know the young inventor.

"Oh, no," Mrs. Leland promptly responded. "He doesn't want acquaintances. Nobody ever sees him, except in his flying machine."

Mr. Storch was enjoying his smoke, but he began to wonder why Rosalind did not appear. Perhaps she had not understood that he would be on the porch. He hoped that when she did appear she would wear something thin, feminine, something with lacy ruffles and ribbons, that would suggest the wish to attract and please. Of course she always looked neat, but Mr. Storch did not admire such severe plainness of attire.

Rosalind meanwhile was happily employed in the garden of the old Wright house. With Wright's assistance she had transplanted some sturdy sweet-williams, and Wright had just gone to the shed for a basket. Rosalind was regarding the results of their afternoon's work with satisfaction, when the

purr of a motor just outside the hedge made her realize a peril close at hand. She knew instantly that it was Von Storch, probably accompanied by the Lelands. To be found at work in Wright's garden would involve explanations for which she had no mind. She turned and ran swiftly toward the house, through the kitchen to her own room, which she had but just reached when Mr. Storch came up the path. He was alone. He had tired of the porch and the Lelands, and had decided to see Peters again, and make another effort to secure the gun-lift.

Wright, coming from the shed and meeting Mr. Storch face to face, began to think favorably of Orrin's suggestion in regard to the purchase of a dog.

"You came through the garden?" Wright asked sharply.

"Yes, yes, I came on the road. I have no airships, my friend," replied Mr. Storch amiably, and Wright drew a long breath. Evidently, he decided, the fellow had not seen Rosalind. But he must get rid of this unwelcome visitor at once. If Rosalind was unaware of his arrival she might appear at any moment, and all the beautiful romance and delight of their companionship would be clouded by a buzz of inquiry and suggestion.

"I have decided to keep my gun-lift. You can't



have it," said Wright brusquely. "And I am busy. I am sorry to seem rude, but the fact is I can't have visitors. I made that rule, as I think my boy told you. I have nothing to sell, so you can save yourself the trouble of coming again."

Mr. Storch listened without a shadow of offence appearing upon his pink countenance.

"I understand. Per-fect-ly. The young lady does not like to be disturbed in her garden," and he nodded, and smiled. He still intended to get hold not only of the desired gun-lift, but he meant to know more about the contents of Wright's workshop. He would not show anger at present, but he would let this silly youth understand that he had eyes in his head.

He stood waiting, expecting to see Wright show some sign of uneasiness, or in some way make it possible for Mr. Storch to overlook the rudeness of his reception. But Wright stood as if expecting the visitor to depart and, after an uncomfortable moment, Mr. Storch turned and sauntered back toward his car. He stopped a moment at the gate and looked back to where Rosalind's wide-rimmed straw hat lay beside her gloves and trowel. Then with a muttered word he entered his car. It was not only Orrin, he now resolved that Peters, too, should suffer for his presumption. It was getting time, he thought angrily, that Americans should

be taught how to treat Germans, that they should understand who was who in this world. He rejoiced that very soon he would be in a position to command these swine to do his bidding. He did not think much about the girl just then. It did not occur to him that it might be Miss Allan.

## CHAPTER TWELVE

**M**Y hat!" Rosalind gasped, as she looked down on the tell-tale evidence. "He must have seen it."

Mr. Storch and his car had whizzed out of sight before Rosalind left the shelter of the house.

"He mentioned a lady in the garden," Wright said laughingly, "and I had half a mind to tell him that it was my wife."

Neither of them were thinking very much about the unwelcome visitor. They were again standing together, the old garden, fragrant and blossoming, lay all about them. The old house, which was to be their home, sent an arm of protecting shadow over them. That anything could spoil their happiness now seemed unbelievable. Only an hour ago Rosalind had promised that she would marry Wright as soon as the necessary arrangements could be made. Neither of them had to consult the wishes of any human being. Rosalind recalled Mrs. Spencer's description of the winter solitude with delight.

Wright walked with her along the river path and across the pasture, nearly in sight of the Spencer

house, before he said good-night. They were to meet the next day.

He sauntered back along the way they had just come, his thoughts filled with all the joy that life could give. He felt as if he had discovered love. And they would live in this beautiful old town, in the house in which his mother had been born. He thanked his good fortune that Rosalind cared as little as he for what city life could offer.

Rosalind turned into the main road after leaving Wright. As she stepped from behind some low growing spruce trees she found herself standing beside Mr. Storch's car. It's owner sat there alert and smiling.

"Why, Miss Allan!" he exclaimed, with well simulated surprise, "where are you starting off?"

"I am on my way home," Rosalind answered. She knew of no reason why she should fear this man, or be uneasy in his presence, but she was suddenly conscious that she did fear him.

"Then I am just in time again," he said. "It isn't far, but as long as we are both on the way you had better ride."

His voice was indifferent, he held the car door open as if not caring whether she accepted the suggestion, it was hardly more, or not. To herself Rosalind said that it was absurd to make an objection. She stepped into the car.

Mr. Storch smiled triumphantly. He had gone but a short distance from Wright's house on his departure before he had stopped his machine, left it beside the road, and in the shelter of the hedge had crept back. He had seen Rosalind and Wright in the garden, and had quickly understood that they were lovers. Then he had returned to his car and ran it slowly along to this point where, sheltered by the trees, it could not be seen by any one coming across the fields from the Peters house. Everything had worked out exactly to his liking. Rosalind was now in his car. He was quite sure that Mr. Wright Peters would soon forget his little flirtation with this girl, especially when he should hear of this evening's excursion.

Again the car sped past Mrs. Spencer's. Again Rosalind reminded its driver of the fact.

"And I don't care to ride tonight," she added.

She had seen Mr. and Mrs. Leland on the porch. She was annoyed that Mrs. Leland would have another opportunity to make comments on Mr. Storch and herself.

Mr. Storch made no response. He was smiling, as if well satisfied with himself. The speed of the car increased. For a time Rosalind was silent. Her silence had the effect of making Mr. Storch voluble. He told her that she need not be alarmed. If, on their return to Mrs. Spencer's the following

day, Mrs. Spencer made any unkind remarks, he would drive her to Portland, and she could take a train back to Boston and return to her work. He informed her that he had a great deal more money than Peters, and that he really liked her. At last he reached out an arm to embrace her.

Rosalind leaned quickly toward him; with both hands she clutched at the driving wheel. The big car seemed to stand on end for a brief moment. Then it lurched sideways, overturned, and lay across the road. As it rose in the air the girl leaped over the side, striking on her side. She lay there when Mr. Holden and a friend from River Junction came driving home from a neighboring town. Her right arm was broken, and when they lifted her into the wagon she moaned with pain.

"Bad piece of work this," said Mr. Holden, as he and his companion managed to move the car sufficiently to pull out the body of Storch. At first they were sure that he was dead, but it proved that he still breathed, although it was evident that he was seriously injured.

Mr. Holden drove Rosalind slowly toward Mrs. Spencer's. She was suffering from the pain in her arm, and her head throbbed and ached. She did not ask her companion's fate. She hoped that the accident had killed him.

Mr. Holden told the Spencers what had occurred

as far as his knowledge went. Mr. Storch had been carried to the nearest house, and a messenger dispatched for the doctor at Riverdale, who was to stop at the Spencers' on his return and attend to Rosalind.

Mrs. Spencer made the girl as comfortable as possible. The doctor did not come until well on in the evening; he declared the broken arm to be the only serious injury that Rosalind had suffered.

"But I can't say that her companion got off as well," he said, in response to Mr. Leland's inquiries. "The man's face is terribly bruised, his nose is broken, his left hand badly crushed, and he has a couple of broken ribs. But he was conscious when I left."

Mr. Leland lost no time in sending telegrams to Mr. Storch's firm, and to a Portland surgeon. For several days he spent nearly all his time at the farm house where Von Storch was being cared for, and as soon as it was possible for him to be moved the Lelands both accompanied him to Boston, and Rosalind was left to be nursed back to health by Mrs. Spencer.

Orrin had brought the news of the accident to Wright the morning after it happened, and the surprise and delight of Mrs. Spencer when the young man appeared at her door announcing that Rosalind was his betrothed, and that he must be

permitted to see her at once, and whenever he chose, was only equaled by Mrs. Leland's disgust at what she termed Rosalind's slyness and deceit.

"What was she riding with Mr. Storch for?" Mrs. Leland demanded to know, but as neither Mr. Leland or the Spencers could answer, she went away with what she termed her "own opinion" of the future Mrs. Peters.

The first of August, that day of flame and horror that the whole world will remember so long as mankind exists, found Rosalind able to come down stairs for the first time. She was now quite willing to sit in the big chair which Mrs. Leland had formerly occupied. Wright came to see her each day. It had been decided that their marriage should not take place immediately. Although the broken arm was the most serious of Rosalind's injuries, she was slow in recovering her usual health and spirits.

Rosalind made no inquiry about Storch. She knew that if he had been killed she would not regret her act. She hoped that he had not, in any event, escaped easily. Some day she meant to tell Wright the whole dreadful story, but at present she tried to put the memory of the man Storch, and all that he had dared say to her, as far away as possible. He had darkened and shadowed all the glory of the summer.



A letter from Madame Ress, remailed from Boston, reached Rosalind on the day after her accident. The travellers were on their way to northern France. When Rosalind read the letter to Wright, on the first day that she came out to the porch, he looked troubled.

"I hope they have changed their plans," he said. "The Germans are in Belgium. Unless they are stopped within the week, no woman will be safe in northern France. I hope they are on their way home before this."

It was a week later when Wright received a letter from Mr. Mason asking him to come to Boston immediately.

"I must go, of course," Wright said, when he showed Rosalind the message. "It probably means that he is anxious in regard to Beryl's safety. It may mean that he will want me to go across after her."

It proved that Mr. Mason was worried, and even alarmed as to the dangers that his daughter and Madam Ress might encounter. He wanted Wright to start at once for France, and bring them home, and Wright agreed. He wrote Rosalind of his decision. With ordinary good luck he could be back early in September. He said that he had written Orrin to stay in the old house until his return.

Wright had called on Walter and offered him the

opportunity to go in his place, but Walter had expressed only amusement at the suggestion.

"I'll own up now that I never was in love with Beryl," he said lightly. "You might as well understand that," he said. "And it is folly for you to bother about old Mason's being worried. The war will be over before you get home. Germany will get what she's after. She is the only nation that is ready or wants to fight, so France will have to let her do as she pleases."

"Don't you believe it. England will come in, and the United States will have a word to say before they will let France suffer too much," declared Wright, thinking to himself that if he had another day's time he would pack his plane and take it as a gift with his own services to heroic Belgium.

Rosalind received the news of Wright's departure for France on the very day that she telegraphed Mrs. Weevly to send her such possessions as she had left in the Pembroke-street house. Orrin had taken the message to the Riverdale station, together with one to her employers giving up her position. She had a few hundred dollars in a Boston savings bank, and she was quite ready to stay at Mrs. Spencer's until she went to her own home. But Wright's unexpected news made her anxious and troubled. She knew instinctively that her lover

would be moved by Belgium's need and by the peril of France. She said to herself that she had expected too much happiness in hoping that they might grow old together. She did not doubt Wright's love or loyalty, but she was sure that now her greatest joy must be in the memory of the few summer days they had passed together. Now she thought of Storch. And she imagined an army of men like him sweeping into villages such as Riverdale. She saw women and children appealing in vain to endless Storches! And she owed to her defeated happiness that if her lover gave up their future to defeat the evil of such creatures that she would not by one word hold him back. That brief hour beside Von Storch in the automobile, when her only escape seemed death, had given Rosalind a vision of a misery such as made the ordinary ills of life seem as nothing. Her arm mended rapidly, but it would be weeks before she could hope to use it. It was a week after Wright's departure before she visited the old house. Orrin was there, and welcomed her with delight.

"I'm going to buy a dog, Miss Allan. The boss wrote me that I could pay ten dollars for one. Mr. Holden says he knows just the right dog. He's going to get him and fetch him over today."

Rosalind agreed that this was good news, and Orrin continued.

"If we'd had a smart pup that sneaking old Storch wouldn't have come poking around here. I guess he'll stay where he is for a spell."

Rosalind walked about the garden, but this time she did not enter the house. Orrin was sure that his employer would soon be home. The boy wondered that Wright should have started off just before the time when he was to be married. Orrin knew that there were other countries beside America, but why anyone should wish to visit them, or be interested in what happened to them, was more than he could understand. It was a lesson, however, that he was to learn before many years passed.

It was three weeks before a word came from Wright. He had followed after Madame and Beryl from Picardy into Holland, to discover that they had sailed for England. He was going to England after them, and if all went well, they would soon be on their way to America. He said nothing of the war. And now Rosalind dared to be happy again. She said to herself that she had been depressed and fearful because of her broken arm and shaken nerves. Probably Germany had already been brought to terms. Wright would soon be home, and they would look back on all this worry and trouble as of small importance.

Mrs. Spencer rejoiced over Rosalind's returned cheerfulness. She still insisted on waiting upon the

girl to a greater extent than was at all necessary. And not until Rosalind declared that she would not eat any breakfast unless she was permitted to eat in the kitchen, did Mrs. Spencer feel that the girl was really on the road to recovery. She had confided to her husband that there was more to that automobile accident than anybody imagined, and that it wouldn't surprise her if Mr. Storch had been drinking and upset the car. She hoped Rosalind would refer to the accident. But as the days and weeks passed and Rosalind never mentioned it, or made any response to Mrs. Spencer's friendly efforts to place the blame for the broken arm, she at last put the matter out of her mind, but with the reservation that, "after reading what Germans have done in Belgium it's a wonder we wa'n't all burned in our beds.'

September passed without another word from Wright. But on the first day of October a telegram came for Rosalind. Wright had arrived in New York. He would reach home as soon as possible.

## CHAPTER THIRTEEN

**M**ADAME RESS and Beryl did not return with Wright. They had decided to remain in England; at least for a time. Madame Ress would stay only long enough to see Beryl safely installed in a training school for nurses, and would then return to France to be of what service she could to her martyred land.

Wright remained in Boston only a few hours on his way to River Junction. In a way he felt his journey had been unavailing, as Beryl and her companion had not needed him. They had been safely in Holland before the Barbarian hordes swept into peaceful Belgium. But Wright had returned to his own country with the resolve which had stirred the soul of every civilized man on hearing of the German brutalities:— the resolve to give the last drop of his blood, if need be, to punish the Hun. His former plans and ambitions seemed the follies of a child. But he rejoiced in the thought of his plane. There was something that he could offer to France, something that would live and triumph when he could no longer give himself.

He had returned to ship the plane to France, or, failing that, to take with him his models and plans as a gift to the Allies. He had thought constantly of Rosalind. What would she say to a lover who came back to her to say that there was something in his heart greater, more imperative than his love for her? He suddenly realized that he had little real knowledge of the girl he loved. Would she try to hold him by his promised word, by her own need of him? He said to himself that she would not fail him now, when he would so greatly need her understanding, and he recalled Beryl's instant appreciation of his resolve to fight for France, as an assurance that Rosalind could not fail to equal it.

He went straight to Mrs. Spencer's from the train. Mr. Holden had walked beside him for a part of the distance, asking eagerly if the Germans had been driven out of Belgium, and if Wright knew what the United States was going to do about it? He expressed an amazed disbelief when Wright declared it would be a year's job to drive the Germans out.

"Taint possible!" exclaimed Mr. Holden. "By gum! If I thought that France and England couldn't lick the devils I'd go over myself. Yes, sir, I would!"

"That's the way I feel," Wright answered gravely, and with an understanding nod the two parted.

Rosalind was expecting Wright, and came running

down the path to meet him. Her arm was now out of the sling, and she had recovered her usual good health and spirits.

"All right?" he questioned laughingly, as he held her close and looked into her happy eyes.

"Yes, now," she answered, clinging fast to his hand, as if his presence meant health and life to her.

"You are to stay for supper," she announced, as they entered the sitting-room. "I promised Mrs. Spencer that you would stay. And it is a lovely supper. I helped get it."

"I intended to stay. I don't intend to lose a minute of being with you. You see, Rosalind, I must go back to France."

His great news was told. But he went on quickly. Did Rosalind know what the accursed Hun had done in Belgium? Had she read of the women in Lille? Of the murdered children in every village where German troops had set foot?

"You want me to do what I can, say that you do, Rosalind," he pleaded.

Before she could answer he was telling her of Madame Ress's return to her stricken country, of Beryl Mason's resolve to train for service as a nurse. Rosalind listened quietly. She knew that Wright must not think now of their happiness. He must not even think that he would be leaving her alone, nearly penniless, and without home or rela-



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tives. His eyes were upon her almost as if she had suddenly become a stranger. Her silence began to frighten him.

"Rosalind!" he said suddenly, as if pleading for understanding.

"Rosalind, you know, don't you?"

Unconsciously he had spoken the very words with which he had claimed her love. As he had expected her to understand and believe in him then, so now he was sure that she would not fail him. For a moment he held her close as he had held her that far off summer day beside the brown ledges on the lonely island.

"When must you go, Wright?" she asked, her eyes shining, but her face pale with sudden emotion as she realized that a new power, greater than any love between man and woman, was to shape their future, and that she must not fail the man who loved her.

To Wright that moment meant the fulfilment of his love. He could always know her spirit as courageous, unselfish, ready to meet his own in any fine adventure. They smiled at each other as if happiness was close at hand. For the time they forgot to think of the terrors which were to separate them. They were uplifted by their own courage, and when Mrs. Spencer called them to supper she said to herself that she guessed Rosalind and Wright

wouldn't put off their marriage now. "They look as if the day was set," she reflected happily. To have Rosalind marry young Peters and live in the old Wright house, seemed to Mrs. Spencer as wonderful a romance as that of the marriage of Wright's mother and father, and she looked forward to the pleasant neighborliness which the new household would bring into her own life. She left the young couple to their supper, and returned to her comfortable kitchen to tell Simon that she believed that Wright and Rosalind would be married right off.

"What'd he say about the war?" questioned Mr. Spencer, with a fine disregard of possible romance.

"War?" echoed his wife, "Oh, yes, over in Europe, you mean. Well, I guess Wright ain't thinking much about war, and I don't know any reason why he should. Like as not it's all over before this. I look on it as a piece of folly that he should have gone traipsing all over Europe on errands for the Mason family. I guess the Germans know well enough that they da'sn't hurt an American woman."

"You don't know what you're talking about!" declared Mr. Spencer fiercely, "and if Wright Peters ain't thinking about war when such works are going on in this world, then all I have to say is that he ought to be. Why our government don't take steps about it is more'n I know," and Mr. Spencer groaned as one who sees nothing but danger ahead.

“Land, Simon, I ought to have known better than to have set roast pork before you today. Just as sure as you taste of roast pork you begin to go on about the government, and ’taint a mite of use for me to advise you not to eat it, for then you act as if I begrudged it to you. And you know well enough that there’s nothing I like better than to see you enjoy your victuals,” and Mrs. Spencer sighed. Government at home and war abroad seemed matters of small importance to her in comparison with Simon’s digestion.

When Wright started for home that night Rosalind walked a little way down the road with him. There was a chill in the October air, and the scent of dying leaves. When they reached the turn in the road they stopped for a moment and looked up at the eternal stars with the thought of other star-lit country roads, of ruined homes, and lovers’ partings. Wright walked back with her and said good-night at Mrs. Spencer’s door.

Now he ran lightly along the shadowy road toward home. He was happier than he had been for weeks. He whispered Rosalind’s name over to himself as one repeats a talisman for success. He knew that in days to come he could draw courage and inspiration, if need be, from that name.

## CHAPTER FOURTEEN

**T**HE day after Wright's return to River Junction was a pattern for all October days. Warm, but with the crispness of autumn near at hand in the clear air. The maples were in the full glory of their autumn color. Along the hillside pastures the sumacs blazed crimson. The grasses by the roadsides were gold and amber.

Rosalind, walking along the familiar way to the old Wright house in the early afternoon, was hardly conscious of the beauty spread around her. A year ago and she would have delighted in every step of the way. She would have breathed in the fragrance of the autumn air with an exultant sense of youth and life. But the gods do not give all good gifts at the same time; and today her thoughts were full of the wonder of Wright's spirit. Something higher than herself had come into her love for him. She forgot that without him her days might sink back into the routine she had so rebelled against.

As she came near the house she heard the bark of a dog, and her thoughts returned to earth. What would become of this new possession of Wright's

after his departure? Orrin had joyfully purchased a year old puppy, whose parentage was uncertain, but whose firm jaw, well-shaped head and faithful eyes promised well. "Dink," as Orrin promptly named the dog, was an undoubted relative of the Airedale terriers. His dull yellowish coat, with a faintly outlined saddle of black, his sharp nose and pointed ears, proved that he was not without some claim to breeding.

At present he was fastened near the shop where Orrin and Wright were at work. But Wright led him down the path to meet Rosalind, and she ventured to smooth the rough head and speak his name.

"If you were going to stay here, Dink would soon be your best friend. I am almost sorry now, however, to have him on my hands. Orrin is going to Boston into a machine shop, he will go when I leave. Perhaps the Griffiths will take care of Dink until I get back, then we'll have him home," said Wright, as the dog kept close beside him, as if half afraid he might lose this new friend.

There were still flowers in the old garden. A bed of late blooming marigolds made a golden circle near the porch, and farther down the path a border of lady's-delights blossomed courageously. Toward the brook a bunch of barberry bushes with their crimson fruit glowed crimson against the hedge.

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The lovers stood silent for a moment as they looked about the garden. Wright had a swift realization that he might never again see the old garden blossom; never again know or care what beauty it might show. Rosalind was hardly conscious of anything but the thought that she must fill these days to the full with tenderness and joy; a storehouse of memory for them both. She turned to find his eyes resting upon her with a new tenderness. In a moment his arms held her; but they did not speak.

Dink stretched himself out at their feet. It was his first act of loyalty. There was a scolding enticing chipmunk near the hedge, and Dink knew of the amusing game its pursuit offered, but these two silent humans seemed to need sympathy, so Dink stayed by.

After a moment Wright spoke.

"I don't dare be as happy as we planned, Rosalind," he said, "not yet."

"We will be happy, Wright. Let's not forget that we have these beautiful days right now. Our loving each other is happiness, enough to last forever."

They turned toward the house followed by Dink, whom they had entirely forgotten until he stretched himself on the rug in front of the fireplace with a little grunt of satisfaction.

Rosalind kneeled down beside him.

"I want Dink," she said, smoothing the rough head, and looking up at Wright.

Wright's face brightened.

"I hoped you would want him. I shall like to think that he is with you," said Wright, and suddenly he realized that Rosalind had no home, no family to comfort her in his absence. He knew that she had given up her position in the Boston office, and he was sure that she could possess but a small amount of money. His face flushed. He said to himself that he had thought himself a fine fellow, ready to die or suffer in order to protect civilization, but he declared himself a sneak. He owed protection to Rosalind. Why, it was Rosalind who was the hero. It was Rosalind who was to suffer and in silence.

He turned quickly toward her.

"Rosalind. I think I have been crazy these past weeks. I can't go to France. I have no right to go. This is your home. You haven't said a word, and I am ashamed when I think of my own selfishness."

All Rosalind's fine resolves vanished at the thought that Wright meant to stay at home.

"Will you stay, Wright? Do you mean that you will give up going to France? You know, dear, you can send your plane, you will be helping that way. And I can't give you up." She was crying

now. The tears she had kept back when he had told her of his resolve to go, now filled her eyes. She clung to him as if she had no life apart from him.

"Forgive me, Rosalind," he whispered. He had no thought now of not daring to put their happiness, the security and safety of the woman he loved, before that anguished cry of world suffering.

He said to himself that to desert Rosalind, to go to France when it meant her unhappiness, would be the unforgivable sin.

An hour later they walked across the fields to the pine woods, and then on to Mrs. Spencer's. Wright declared that they would be married the coming week. They talked quietly together of their future in the old house. Wright said to himself that he had been excited and unbalanced by what he had seen and heard in France. It had been a wild idea to start off as he had meant to do. What would have become of Rosalind if he had carried out his scheme? Rosalind was her old happy self. They no longer spoke of barbarism and pillage of fair lands. The terror of children, and fleeing women and dying men no longer had a place in their thoughts. Rosalind said to herself that she had a right to be happy. That there was no need for her to try to be more noble than other people. Her lover had said that his first duty was



to her. That should be enough for her. Wright left her at Mrs. Spencer's door. Rosalind had promised to come to supper with him the next night. She smiled happily and waved her hand at him as he turned at the gate. It was a good world, after all, when people took the good things the gods provided, she thought, as she made her way to the kitchen to find Mrs. Spencer, and tell her that the day for her marriage to Wright was set.

Wright was denied sleep this night. He heard the wind in the elm trees and the faint tinkle of the brook, as he lay watching the shadows and dim ghostly shapes which seemed to fill his room. His thoughts persistent, tired, and unhappy, circled in endless chaos.

He thought of Beryl. What would she say to him when they met again? Perhaps they would never meet again, for Beryl was going out to meet danger. Beryl was going to save her soul. He, Wright Peters, was going to stay safely in his grandfather's house and take care of his wife. "Wife," he repeated the word scornfully. And Rosalind had not understood after all. Why couldn't she stay here in the old house until he returned? Of course he would return. Perhaps by another summer. Other women lived alone. There was money enough in the Portland bank for her needs for the winter. The women of France, — his thoughts

seemed to widen in circles. He looked toward the dim window, and could see faint stars shining through the darkness. A feeling of resentment against Rosalind took possession of him. A contempt for himself. What a fool he had been to talk to her as he had that afternoon. As if one's personal happiness meant anything. As if she were a helpless fool, who could not take care of herself.

"Oh, Lord," he muttered, and lay back pulling the sheet over his head.

Someway the night passed, the sun streamed into his windows, and Wright rose, tired and uncertain as to his future course. He wished there was some way that he could take back all that he had said to Rosalind on the previous day.

"I've got to go," he whispered to himself. Perhaps the best way would be to slip away without telling Rosalind. He could send her a deed of the house and a check for his balance in the bank. Then, if he was killed or blinded, and she never saw him again, it would not break her heart. She would only remember that he had deserted her. She would have Dink and the old house that she loved. The thought of Dink sent him hurrying to the shed. He had forgotten to fasten Dink; the dog might be miles away, in his old home. But as Wright opened the kitchen door a pointed nose pushed its way in and two brown reproachful eyes

looked up at him. Supperless, and with a hard step for a sleeping place, Dink had remained faithful to his new home. Wright smiled as he held open the door for Dink to enter.

Orrin, who was now staying at his own home, and who only came to see Wright because he could not keep away, reached the shop before noon and found the "boss" carefully packing his motor.

"Gee, wish I was a couple of years older, I'd go with you," the boy said, "I reckon Germans are just naturally mean. Look at that Storch who was sneaking around here this summer. I don't believe fellows like that are any good."

"There are armies of fellows just like Storch swarming into peaceful towns of France this very day, killing boys like you," Wright answered. He hardly heard Orrin's response. The old eagerness for adventure, for sacrifice, again held him as it had done ever since he had seen the French soldiers marching to meet the enemy.

Dink was no longer fastened. He ran about the garden at his pleasure, and when Rosalind appeared in the early afternoon he was the first to greet her.

She had slept soundly. Her eyes were clear and shining with content. She had been thinking of her mother as she walked along the pleasant road; wondering if it was not possible that her mother was rejoicing in her daughter's happiness.

"She would like this garden. It is the kind she was always telling me about," thought Rosalind, as she saw Dink come bounding to meet her.

"Where's your master?" she questioned. "Oh, in the shop, is he! Well, we'll go to the shop."

Wright nodded smilingly as Rosalind entered. He was carefully packing small, delicately moulded bits of steel. Rosalind stood watching him until he had finished.

"Haven't you any relatives?" he asked, as they turned toward the house.

"None who will want to come to our wedding," she answered laughingly, "but it happens that I have an aunt. Aunt Margaret, her last name is Law. But I haven't the faintest idea where she may be at this moment. When I was a little girl my mother denied herself everything that she could possibly do without to help Aunt Margie. I grew up with a sort of dread of her. And last year when I returned from my beautiful visit in your house there was Aunt Margie waiting for me in my lodging house."

"Well?" questioned Wright, his hopes had risen at the mention of so near a relative. Perhaps this aunt would come and stay with Rosalind.

"She didn't stay long," Rosalind continued, in a more serious voice. "Life wouldn't be worth much to me with Aunt Margie in the foreground."

The eager happiness was fading from Rosalind's face. She was thinking that somehow the very mention of her aunt's name seemed to bring doubt and irritation. She felt as if Wright might be vaguely criticizing her for her attitude toward her aunt. Where was all their splendid vision, their joy in each other? What was the matter with Wright? Her dream of happiness that had begun in the pleasant old kitchen where they were now standing, seemed fading away. She was silent, thinking that there were things that could never be said.

"I have been so happy, Wright, that I had forgotten about you," she said at last, humbly; as one who has claimed something to which they had no right. "I know you must go, dear."

"Yes," Wright answered, with shining eyes, "but my dear, you know I love you. You know it. You are wonderful to see that I couldn't stay. I am sure that it wouldn't do for me not to go. There doesn't seem to be anything else." They clasped hands with a new understanding, henceforth there would be no doubts between them.

"But let's make believe a little," said Rosalind as she returned his kiss. "Just as if we were to see each other every day as long as we lived."

"But first we must talk about your plans, until I come home. For I mean to come home," responded Wright.

"I think I will stay with Mrs. Spencer this winter," said Rosalind. "I don't want to go back to the city. And my hand is not quite useful yet. I can afford to be idle a little."

This seemed a wise decision, and Wright was glad that Rosalind would be with the kindly woman and near his home.

They decided to have their supper in the old kitchen. Rosalind was setting the table when they saw Mrs. Griffith coming up the path carrying a basket covered with a white cloth.

"Got company?" questioned Mrs. Griffith, as Wright opened the door.

"Well, I declare," and she smiled delightedly, as she recognized in Rosalind her customer of the previous year. Mr. Griffith had told her that Wright was "pretty thick," with Mrs. Spencer's boarder, and had predicted that it would be a match. And now it was a pleasant discovery for Mrs. Griffith to find that Mrs. Spencer's boarder and the girl whom she had remembered so pleasantly were one and the same.

"And to think that I didn't guess right off," she said, as Wright introduced her to Rosalind, with the information that some day Rosalind would come and live in the old Wright house.

"That's about the best news I could hear," she responded, "and it will mean considerable to me to

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have you for a neighbor. I hope the happy day isn't far distant?"

So Wright told her that very soon he would be on his way to France.

"We will be married when I come back," he concluded.

Mrs. Griffith listened with an awed surprise. She looked at Rosalind's happy face, and with a little sigh acknowledged that she "guessed it was what Wright ought to do."

"I 'most forgot all about this apple pie I brought you," she said, lifting the napkin from the basket. "You'd better have it for supper. An apple pie don't improve by standing."

Rosalind and Wright insisted that their visitor should sit down with them for supper, refusing to touch the pie unless she agreed.

"Now you young folks walk along home with me," she said as they finished, "This new dog of yours will keep house. He's got a real good face."

Rosalind and Wright were quite ready to agree with such a pleasant suggestion.

The twilight was gathering as they set off across the fields. Here and there a star glimmered in the clear sky, the autumn grass crisped under their feet, and there was the fragrance of apples in the air.

Mrs. Griffith talked cheerfully of Wright's past accidents and rapid recoveries. She warned him

to have his eye out for German deviltry. "For as near as I can make out by what the Portland papers say, those Germans don't stop at nothing," she said.

Wright assured her that he had no intention of becoming a victim. He declared that his plane could outfly any machine the Germans could put in the field, and Mrs. Griffith and Rosalind listened with confidence in Wright's ability to deal with the enemy of the world.

When they reached the gate to the Griffith's yard Mrs. Griffith rested her work-worn hand for a moment on Wright's arm.

"Be you real sure that you ought to go, Wright?" she asked. "I don't want to meddle," she continued a little tremulously, "but being just engaged and all, seem's if you might stay here."

A sudden hope thrilled Rosalind. Perhaps after all it was possible for Wright to stay. But even at the thought she knew that his staying would mean a loss to them both of something even more vital and beautiful than their delight in each other. She realized that they could not go back; the past had closed behind them. They could only go forward.

"You would not think half as much of me if I didn't go, Mrs. Griffith," Wright answered lightly. "You see, it's my big chance." He did not meet Rosalind's look. The quiet fields, the peaceful



skies, the safety of these homely farms, so unspeakably dear, brought to him the picture of that other land of simple homes trying to hold its own against the hordes of German brutes. His clasp on Rosalind's hand tightened until she could hardly bear it.

"Well, you know best," said Mrs. Griffith. "And if Rosalind is willing I guess nobody can say but what you're doing right. Now, I want you should see my parlor," and she turned to Rosalind. "I wanted to ask you in last year, but you never seemed to have a minute to spare. You just go and visit with Robert, Wright. He's finishing up his chores by this time, and he'll admire to see you." Wright turned obediently toward the barns, and Rosalind followed Mrs. Griffith into the kitchen. She opened the door into a shadowy room.

"You step in, and I'll fetch a lamp," she said, and Rosalind stepped into the darkness and stood waiting for the brief moment that it took Mrs. Griffith to lift the lamp from the kitchen mantel and return.

The parlor floor was covered with a woolen carpet which blazed with cabbage roses of a brilliant red on a groundwork of a no less brilliant green. A narrow hair-cloth-covered sofa stood across one corner of the room; beside each of the front windows stood arm chairs matching the sofa. There were

four chairs of a similar design ranged against the wall. The tall mantel was covered by a plush scarf with fringed ends, and ornamented by a variety of vases, match-boxes, and small articles of no use and less beauty. Over this mantel hung crayon portraits of three little girls.

Mrs. Griffith turned toward the portraits. "These are my girls," she said gently. "I lost 'em when they was small. The twins were only eight years old when they went; but Mary Louise lived to be twelve."

As Mrs. Griffith stood there looking up at the crude portraits with patient loving eyes, her hands folded over her gingham dress, Rosalind had a sense of being very near to something beautiful and rare. She could think of no word to say that would be equal to the moment. The highest things cannot be spoken, they can only be felt and understood.

"I wanted you to see 'em," Mrs. Griffith said. "When I used to see you, that time you was camping out, I'd think to myself that if Mary Louise had lived she would have been considerable like you. She had dark hair and a dimple in her chin, same as you have."

Mrs. Griffith turned and looked about the cherished parlor, and "Well," she continued with a little sigh, "I set considerable by this room when we was first married. Robert and I went to Port-

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land and bought the furniture, and it seemed to me then that no young couple could ask for more'n what we had, a good farm all paid for, and a parlor like this. Then when the children came I took pride in this room because I knew they'd enjoy it when they grew up. I used to open it Sundays, and we'd all set in here as a sort of treat. The twins always hid behind the sofa, and when their pa'd come in they'd stick their heads out and call out to him, and he'd make believe that he thought they were strange children. Well, I feel as if they didn't go very far away after all."

Rosalind looked at Mrs. Griffith with a new interest, realizing that this hard-working country woman had lived deeply, and from her toil and love, and from the sorrows and silences of her life, she had won a knowledge and beauty unknown to those whose satisfactions lay in a life of ease and self-indulgence. The younger woman looked at her friend's weather-worn face, with its deep eyes and patient mouth, and comprehended something of this. She could not foresee, however, that in the days to come it would be Ann Griffith's faith and strength that would comfort and uphold her.

There had been a moment's silence when Rosalind said softly, "It is beautiful to have them to remember and think about."

"Yes. Well, I don't complain. We all have

things to bear that we wouldn't choose. I guess it's going to be hard for you to let Wright go to France," responded Mrs. Griffith, as she led the way back to the kitchen.

As Rosalind and Wright walked toward Mrs. Spencer's she told him of that fateful ride with Von Storch. She could remember every word that she had been obliged to listen to on that brief ride, and she did not spare herself or Wright.

"It is dreadful to tell you this, but I had to," she concluded.

Wright muttered words that Rosalind could hardly understand. His thoughts leaped forward to the punishment that he vowed Storch should not fail to receive. But he thrilled with the knowledge of Rosalind's unfaltering courage. He said to himself that every day he was learning some new joy in his love for this dark-eyed girl who walked beside him.

"My dear girl! You were wonderful!" he said, bending to kiss her soft cheek. "I'll kill him," he added fiercely.

They bade each other goodnight with a new sense of sympathy and confidence, Rosalind was comforted by Wright's tenderness, and mingled with her thoughts of him was the memory of Mrs. Griffith and the three little girls who had liked to sit in the parlor on far-off Sundays.

## CHAPTER FIFTEEN

**W**RIGHT had no difficulty in discovering the whereabouts of Mr. Fritz William Von Storch. The firm that had the privilege of his services responded promptly to Wright's telegram of inquiry. Their Mr. Storch, they rejoiced to say, was now fully recovered from an unfortunate automobile accident. They gave his address in New York, and Wright made his plans to have a day to spare in that city before sailing.

He telegraphed Storch on reaching New York, and Storch responded that he would be delighted to see Mr. Peters, and it was arranged that he should call upon Wright at his hotel that evening. The message pleased Mr. Storch. He was quite sure that he knew the young man's errand, that Wright hoped to sell him the gun-lift. He decided that it would be wise to appear a little indifferent in regard to the purchase. Probably the young man needed the money, and now that Germany intended to take its proper position as director of the affairs of the world, Germany's sons could make their own terms with these swine of English-speaking

Americans. Mr. Storch had a moment's recollection of Wright and Rosalind as he had last seen them in the old garden, but he smiled at the remembrance. Young Peters, like himself, doubtless, was merely looking for amusement, and had forgotten the little garden affair long before this. Mr. Storch wished that he could forget the girl. But Rosalind was the evil spirit who at times haunted his waking hours. He no longer thought of her scornfully. Great Heavens! That a girl should be possessed of such courage! With a shiver of physical terror he would recall the moment when she had wrenched the wheel of the car from his grasp. Rosalind had proved able to protect herself from him, therefore, with the peculiar psychology of the German mind, he now thought of her with respect.

It had never occurred to him that Wright Peters could know the story of the wrecked automobile, or that he would in any event become the champion of Rosalind, so it was with smiling assurance that he entered Wright's hotel.

Wright received his guest at the door of his room, and relieved Mr. Storch of his cane, hat and the light overcoat he carried. Closing the door Wright turned the key in the lock and faced his visitor.

"Well, you hound!" was the salutation that assailed Storch's astounded ears. But he had no time to reflect upon it, for in an instant his wrists

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were seized and bound tightly together, and a towel gagged his mouth. He kicked and struggled violently, but it was of no avail. It did not take Wright long to secure his feet, and Storch was utterly helpless. Storch's eyes bulged with terror when Wright opened a pocket-knife and approached him. What did this devil mean to do? he wondered frantically. But he was soon informed. Wright slit his prisoner's coat and shirt down the back, closed the knife and returned it to his pocket, and picked up a small whip of pliable leather which had rested in a twisted curl on the table.

Wright used the lash vigorously until the pink skin of the German's back rose in welts. He threw himself about in vain struggles, moaning and whimpering.

"This isn't all you deserve," Wright said a little breathlessly, as he threw the whip back on the table, "but it's a sample to remind you of your automobile ride with Miss Allan, and of your charming plans in regard to her. You devil! If she had only told before you got away from Riverdale every man in that town would have helped to give you what you deserved. Now, listen to me carefully, if you want to live. I have in my right hand pocket a loaded revolver. I am going to untie your hands and feet. Then I'll fix you up to look more like a human being than you do just now, and escort you

to the street. I hope your conduct on the way out won't make it necessary for me to use the revolver?"

Storch promised whimperingly, as Wright helped him on with the overcoat, then, holding the German closely by the arm, he opened the door and led him toward the elevator. As they entered Wright was talking pleasantly to his companion, calling him by name.

"It's been a great pleasure, Mr. Storch, to find that you think Germany has forfeited all right to be considered a civilized nation, and that you despise her rulers. I own that you have surprised me, as you are a German citizen. But you are right. No decent man can think otherwise."

Anyone who happened to notice the two young men would have been sure that it was difficult for Mr. Storch to restrain himself from cursing Germany and all her works. His flushed face, set lips, and expression of indignant wrath, would have proved to any observer who might hear his companion's words, that here, at least, was a German who did not uphold the crimes of his countrymen.

Wright stepped out of the elevator smiling upon his companion, whose arm he clasped in friendly fashion. He guided Mr. Storch to a side street, let go his hold on his arm, and with a swift kick sent him tumbling into the street. Then, without

another look in his direction, Wright walked back to his hotel.

His steamer would sail at an early hour the next morning, and he intended going aboard that night. His luggage was already on board, and an hour later, he had paid his bill at the hotel and was on his way to the wharf.

As the cab rattled along over the rough pavements Wright recalled the expression of Storch's face in the elevator, and smiled with satisfaction. He had the pleasant consciousness of a good deed well done.

Storch had gathered himself up from the pavement, and whimpering with pain and anger made his way to his lodgings. For a day or two he was so absorbed by his physical ills that he thought but little of the conditions that had brought them to pass. But as he recovered he was surprised to find that he had acquired a new viewpoint in regard to Americans. He said to himself that he had been deceived in regard to believing that Americans were too proud to fight. Great Heavens! Had not that boy in Peter's workshop assaulted him like a wild boar? Had not that girl, who was a nobody earning her own living, without a moment's hesitation risked her life rather than yield to him? And now that devil of an inventor had nearly murdered him. Mr. Von Storch resolved to warn several of his countrymen, who were planning the easy subjection

of Americans to German influence, that it might be a more difficult matter than they expected, and that it would be well to have no personal cause of trouble with them. And he resumed his usual business duties with so depressed an air that his associates decided that Storch already knew that the Germans could not win.

## CHAPTER SIXTEEN

**R**OSALIND'S first love letter was a very brief missive. Wright had written it on his arrival in New York, and it reached her the day after he sailed.

"DEAREST — *Whatever the future brings I am always wholly yours,*

WRIGHT."

Pages could not have told her more. Enclosed with this was the deed of the old Wright place, which he had had executed before leaving River Junction.

For a week or two after Wright's departure Rosalind went every day to the old house, coming home in the late afternoon to help Mrs. Spencer prepare supper. Dink was her constant companion, but it was soon evident that he realized that the old Wright house was his home, and that Mrs. Spencer's shed, where his sleeping quarters were located, was only a temporary refuge.

Now and then Rosalind would walk across the fields to visit the Griffiths, and often Mrs. Griffith would appear at the kitchen door of the old house

bringing apple tarts or a mince turnover for the girl's lunch. As they sat together before Rosalind's open fire one day in late October, with Dink stretched out near the hearth, Mrs. Griffith spoke of her own youth. It had been the uneventful life of a girl born into a large family, where there was no margin for any luxury.

"I never had much of a chance for any book-learning," she said, "but I don't know as that matters. We all had to keep busy, and mother never had a minute to call her own. But I don't recall as she ever give one of us a hateful word. She was always pleasant, and always ready to listen to what we had to tell her. I guess she was more patient than most. Still, for all that, I didn't have any too easy a time."

"But you have been happy, Mrs. Griffith. You had brothers and sisters, and Mr. Griffith and your little girls," Rosalind responded, with a vague consciousness of having missed the natural human relations that are the general lot.

"Land, yes, of course I've been happy. I guess I'm kind of set in my idea that the Lord gives more'n he can take away, and we have to be reminded once in a while, same as children do when they want more'n is good for 'em, that we mustn't have our own way about everything. I guess that most of us have our full share of happiness, 'tho it

comes in different ways to different folks. Now, I guess there ain't many girls of your age who would have thought it was a real good time to camp out all alone as you did last summer. Well, I must be going home," and Mrs. Griffith rose slowly from the comfortable rocker. "You be sure and cover up your fire, and start for Mrs. Spencer's before it gets dark," she said, as she made her way toward the door.

After her friend's departure Rosalind sat before the smouldering fire until it died away into grey ashes, and the room filled with shadows of early twilight. Her thoughts traveled back to her own childhood. She remembered how as a young girl she had planned for her own happiness, her own success in the material things of life. How she had resented Aunt Margie's demands upon her mother because it interfered with her ambitions. She recalled, with a little sense of wondering surprise, that at school she had not cared for her companions, and had been but vaguely interested in their amusements or occupations. With a new sense of affection she remembered Amy Dill's persistent friendliness. Amy had had a dozen intimates among their schoolmates, while Rosalind could hardly remember their names from term to term. In her work the people she had come in contact with had meant but little more to her than the furniture of the office. There

was Miss Madden, the bookkeeper, who had made several efforts to be friendly. Rosalind thought of her own indifference now with a new consciousness of her own selfishness. Madame Ress, with all her kindly interest, Rosalind realized, had made her realize the meaning of friendship.

As she sat there in the gathering shadows she no longer deceived herself by the thought that she would have been more friendly toward people if life had been more kind to her. Her thoughts flew to Wright, his simple loyalty to the highest, his complete unselfishness. She remembered the manner in which he had accepted the conditions of his father's will, without bitterness or blame. And now he had put happiness and personal safety aside as a small matter in comparison with a man's duty toward humanity. For the first time in her life Rosalind was conscious of a sense of utter unworthiness.

"Selfish! Selfish!" she said aloud, as she knelt to rake the ashes over the last spark of dying fire. "I have been blind to everything that did not concern myself," she thought with an aching sense of gratitude toward the Power that had given her Wright's love.

As she closed the door of her lover's home behind her that night and started for her walk along the dusky road, she made a promise to the Fates. She



would no longer plan and work wholly for Rosalind Allan. She knew as never before that no life was too poor to give kindness, if nothing else. There is no desert in which friendship will not grow. It was nearly dark when she opened Mrs. Spencer's door, and Mrs. Spencer turned from the bread she was moulding with vigorous thumps, to smile a welcome.

"I was beginning to think that Mrs. Griffith had beguiled you over to her house," she said, "and I was going to be real put out if you didn't come home. Simon's had to go to the Junction, and he won't be back till all hours. What say to our having some creamed fish and baked potatoes for supper?"

"Splendid!" declared Rosalind. She was rather glad that Mr. Spencer would not be home for supper. He could talk of nothing but the war, and tonight Rosalind dared not think of it lest her new resolution be forgotten. Mr. Spencer declared that the conflict would last for years. He reviled the Government of the United States that it did not instantly prepare to go to the rescue of France. He spoke of Wright with a mournful admiration, as one speaks of the heroic dead, and tonight Rosalind was glad to have only the cheerful company of Mrs. Spencer.

"I guess that I never told you that Simon sings in the choir of the Congregational church, did I?" questioned Mrs. Spencer, as she and Rosalind sat

down to supper. "He sings tenor. And he's gone over to practice with the others tonight. He was saying just before he left that there wasn't much satisfaction in traveling off three or four miles to sing with folks who know nothing and fear nothing so far as music is concerned. Simon says there's a sight more to music than just catching a tune."

Rosalind agreed, her thoughts were not on Mr. Spencer's opinions of music. She was thinking that she must return to work, that she had no right to stay idle, absorbed by her own affairs, when half the world was in peril. She had resolved on her way home to work, to try and help, even if only by the gift of what money she could spare from her earnings, to the suffering children of Belgium and France. But she said nothing to Mrs. Spencer of this resolve.

As Rosalind prepared for bed that night she thought of Mrs. Spencer and Mrs. Griffith with a new sense of appreciation. She knew that life could give her nothing better than to have married Wright and live on with these friendly neighbors.

She was soon asleep. She awoke suddenly in the deep stillness of the night from a dream which still seemed about her. In her dream she had walked along a familiar Boston street and entered a shop. She had gone from one counter to another selecting beautiful garments, delicate underwear, of the

sheerest linen, gowns of soft heavy white silk, a long loose coat of blue velvet, of so soft a color that it reminded her only of the forget-me-nots near the brook. Holding these in her arms she had returned to the street and placed them carefully in a small hand-cart, which seemed to have been left there for her.

As she pushed the cart along before her she had a vague realization that the cart was in something the shape of a cross. The street was silent and deserted save for a friendly policeman on the corner, who silently pointed the direction she was to take. Gradually the pavement grew less smooth, and she found herself in a narrow way where it was difficult to push the cart before her. It had been twilight when she came out of the store, and now it was dark. She could hardly see her way. The path crept in a winding line toward the summit of a distant hill, and looking up Rosalind could see a long dark building with square towers.

"It is like the picture that Madame Ress treasured of the cathedral in her town," she thought. "If it is a cathedral, I will go in, for I may never see one again."

She had no consciousness of surprise or wonder. It was as if this had been planned and looked forward to. As she drew near the building a soft, starry light shone out from the entrance, and leaving her cart near the door, Rosalind entered.

"Yes, it is a cathedral," she whispered, looking at the clustered pillars, the arched roof, and the distant altar. Above the altar her eyes rested upon a figure of Christ, which seemed hardly to be a decoration, but stood out as if hovering over the carved figures of groups of saints and winged cherubs. The light, so dim in the far recesses of the building, centered over these figures, and Rosalind noticed a narrow twisting stair that led from the decorations to the altar.

As she stood looking upward the figure of Christ seemed to move forward. She watched it with an awed wonder. Yes, it moved. It seemed to float slowly down the stairway. The light followed it.

Suddenly Rosalind was afraid. She seemed to realize that she was far from all familiar surroundings. How could she ever find her way home? As she started toward the door, the shadowy figure of the altar came toward her and she heard him say.

"Can I help you?"

"Oh, I don't know where I am. I am frightened!" she answered, wishing that she could see his face more clearly.

"You need not be afraid. Nothing can hurt you." said the gentle voice. "You are surrounded by love." And the shadowy figure moved on, the light gathering about him, and Rosalind could see

that his robe was the soft blue of the forget-me-nots by the brook.

"It was Christ!" she exclaimed aloud, now wide awake.

She sat up in bed as if listening. Through her open windows she could hear the flutter of dropping leaves, and could see the faint glimmer of a fading star in the morning sky. She drew the quilt around her shoulders and sat shivering in the chill air. What could such a dream mean? She wondered with a dull fear in her heart if some evil had befallen Wright. And the gentle voice seemed to echo in her heart:

"You need not be afraid."

She lay back on the pillows and waited for daylight, filled with a vague excitement. Some day she would tell this dream to Wright, she resolved, but until then she would keep it safe in her own consciousness. A calendar hung beside her narrow mirror and as Rosalind turned the page that morning she read the message for the day.

"The things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal."

For several days after the vision of the dream shadowed Rosalind's thoughts. She did not speak of it to Mrs. Spencer or Mrs. Griffith, half-fearing that they would say it meant bad news in store. A letter from Wright dispelled something of the

dream's reality, and she began to make her plans to return to work.

Wright had already made a successful flight over the German lines. His air-plane was approved by the French aviators, and he had found a number of young Americans in the service of France. It was not a love letter, but Rosalind read it with delight. "Dearest Rosalind," and "yours, Wright," was enough, would always be enough, so long as she knew that he lived.

Mrs. Spencer noticed that Rosalind was in a happier frame of mind, and when she spoke of her decision to return to Boston, Mrs. Spencer declared that she had been expecting it.

"I ain't going to say a word to stop you," she said, a little mournfully, "no knowing what this war may bring, nor how long before you'll see Wright," and she tightened her apron strings with precision. But Mrs. Griffith listened with evident disappointment when Rosalind told her that she had received a letter from her former employers and that they wished her to return.

"Don't you do it, my dear," she said earnestly. "Wright wanted you to stay here. He likes to think of you going in and out of his house, and it ain't no time for you to upset his mind about your whereabouts. If you want to earn a little something why don't you apply for a chance to keep books in

the spool factory at River Junction? They need a bookkeeper."

But Rosalind shook her head. She had promised herself to make some effort toward friendship with Miss Madden, whose past kindness she had so thoughtlessly passed by. And she had no wish to walk the distance each day between Mrs. Spencer's and the spool factory. Mrs. Griffith sighed.

"Well, I guess I was taking a sight more comfort in having you for a neighbor than I had any right to, but maybe Wright will be coming home by spring, and then I'll have you both." Rosalind agreed hopefully. It seemed to her at that moment that life was sure to be kind to her; sure to bring her lover safely back in a few months.

A week before the time set for Rosalind's departure the fall rains began. The country roads grew muddy, and there was no longer any pleasure in walking the familiar way to the old house. The leaves, now brown and sodden, drifted over the grass walk, and the elm trees showed each delicate tracery of branch and twig. It was a disappointment to Rosalind to give up her daily visits to Wright's home, and when, on the day before she was to return to Boston, the sky cleared and a strong west wind bade fair to dry the road, she set out, with Dink racing before her, for a good-bye look at the place which was the centre of her dreams.

But as she reached the porch she decided not to go in. She leaned against the door for a moment whispering a little prayer for Wright, and then, without a backward glance, started toward Mrs. Griffiths, where she was to leave the key, and take farewell of Dink, who would stay with the Griffiths "until called for."

Mrs. Griffith bade her good bye with evident emotion.

"If you get tired out, or homesick, you come straight back. You'll be as welcome in this house as if you were my own girl, and I can't say more'n that," she declared, and Rosalind thanked her gratefully. She took no formal leave of Dink, who was astounded to find that he was not to accompany her home.

As Rosalind followed the path across the fields she resolved to visit the pine covered hill, and turned into the rough pasture. The wind came sweeping up from the river, and the air was sharp with a touch of coming winter. A little flock of wind-driven birds flying low swept over her head as they hurried on to some far sheltering trees. She breasted the hill sturdily, glad of the wind and the clear sharp air. She was conscious of a new sense of strength, and happier than she had been since Wright's departure. His first brief letter from New York lay warm against her heart, and her lover seemed a part of all the familiar way.



“What is to come we know not. But we know that what has been was good —” she said aloud, as she reached the shelter of the pines and made her way to the place where she and Wright had shared their first meal.

As she sat there looking down the slope to the little cove where she had bathed that far-off summer morning, her thoughts again traveled over her past, and for the first time she realized that she had been a fortunate, a well-beloved child. Her girlhood, which she had so long thought dull and uneventful, she now realized had been smooth and untroubled. She recalled with a certain surprised sense of elation that her mother had known delight and happiness in her. And what other girl had ever possessed so wonderful a lover as Wright? Or found him in so romantic a fashion? Resting back against one of the tall trees she felt herself possessed of every beautiful gift of life. She thought with content of her return to her work. She would never again, she knew, have the old wish for dainty raiment. She meant that the greater part of her earnings should go to Belgium. To spend for personal vanity or pleasure seemed to her now nearly criminal. Her whole life had been changed, and her spirit sweetened and uplifted by the direct simplicity of Wright’s heroism.

She hurried home across the fields, and came

flushed and smiling into Mrs. Spencer's friendly kitchen, just as she had come in happier days. But this last day had been one to remember, she thought gratefully. Mrs. Spencer was just putting the rolls in the oven; the lamp, which stood on a small stand between the two windows, was already lit and Mr. Spencer was reading the weekly paper. His set lips and occasional groans argued ill for the future of America. As Rosalind came into the room he looked over his paper to declare that it would not surprise him to hear that German ships were right in Portland harbor.

For a moment Mrs. Spencer had her old fear. Simon had eaten a piece of excellent broiled ham for his dinner; and if he should now assert that the Government of the United States was about to be handed over to Berlin, she would never again set ham before him; but he retreated behind his paper without further remark, and Rosalind started upstairs to brush her wind-blown hair. She hummed a little tune as she set the candle down on the bureau, and in its little circle of light noticed a letter resting against the pin-cushion. It had been remailed from Boston. It was a square white envelope, her name and address type-written, and in the upper left-hand corner was a printed address.

She put it down carelessly. Probably an adver-

tisement, she thought; but she took it with her when she returned to the kitchen.

"Found your letter, didn't you," commented Mrs. Spencer. "I see it said 'Presbyterian Hospital' in one corner."

"Probably it's a circular," said Rosalind carelessly, unfolding the type-written sheet. She read it through slowly, and held it out to Mr. Spencer.

"Read it aloud, please," she said, her voice trembling a little, "I don't think I understand it."

Mr. Spencer took the letter, adjusted his glasses and, pronouncing each word with great deliberation, read:

*New York, November the seventh*

MISS ROSALIND ALLAN,

*Dear Madam:*

*Mrs. Margaret Law is a patient in this hospital; and as we find a card in her possession giving your address and stating that you are her niece, we write to inform you of her condition.*

*She was brought here two days ago, the victim of an automobile accident. Since that time she has been conscious only at intervals, and has not spoken. Her left foot and leg were crushed. Every effort is being made to prevent the necessity of amputation. Your address is the only knowledge we have in regard to*

*Mrs. Law; and as she had but a few dollars in her purse when brought here, she is in our free ward.*

*Hoping to hear from you immediately,*

*We remain,*

As Mr. Spencer finished reading he put the letter on the table, removed his glasses, and looked toward his wife, who was standing near the stove ready to take the biscuit from the oven.

“Well! I declare! You’ll have to go right on, and as for working in Boston I guess you’ll have to give up all notion of that,” she said, bending to open the oven door.

“What I say is, why don’t the United States Government do something about all these automobile accidents? That’s what I want to know.” And Mr. Spencer picked up the paper again. “Talk about war,” he continued, “ain’t war and slaughter going on in our streets every day! harmless women injured for life, and no steps taken.”

“You’ll have to take the early train just as you planned, I s’pose?” said Mrs. Spencer, for once failing to regard her husband’s opinions of his democratic government, “and if your aunt has a long spell of sickness, as like as not she will, you’d better plan to fetch her to the old Peters house. It’s a terrible thing to happen, I will say,” and she regarded Rosalind with compassionate eyes.

Rosalind made no response. She set the table for supper, as had been her pleasant task for the past few weeks. She asked if they were to have cranberry sauce or strawberry jam; and she replied to Mrs. Spencer's questions in regard to her aunt: "Yes, Aunt Margie was her mother's only sister. No, she had no children or husband. Yes, her aunt had visited her in Boston the previous year. She did not know if her aunt had an income or not."

She accepted Mrs. Spencer's decision that it would be wise for Simon to drive right over to the station and send a telegram to the hospital that Rosalind would start for New York as soon as possible, and she went up to her room at the usual hour.

"Seems kind of stunned, don't she," said Simon, as Rose closed the kitchen door behind her. "Wonder why she never spoke about this aunt?"

"Maybe she never spoke about her for the same reason that I never have a word to say about my own first cousins in Gorham, and you never mention your Uncle Ezra. Every family has its opinion about its own folks," replied Mrs. Spencer with unusual sharpness. "There's times when I recall what the Bible has to say about Melchisedec being without relations and think he was blessed more'n he realized. I'm afraid Rosalind is going to have a hard time."

“Well, so far as I can see, that’s what most of us have,” responded Mr. Spencer, a little note of reproach in his voice. He was not to blame, he reflected, for Uncle Ezra being a miserable old drunkard, and, anyway, Uncle Ezra wasn’t so much worse than a good many other people.

## CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

**A**LMOST unconsciously Rosalind had accepted the Spencers' decision that she must, at whatever inconvenience and trouble to herself, go directly to New York and do all that she could for her aunt. When she reached her room she sat down near the window and thought over the situation.

The fact that Aunt Margie carried her address, with the information that Rosalind was her niece, awakened Rosalind's old rebellion against her. It was as if her aunt held to her as a refuge, a buffer against adversity. But she remembered, however, that when she had found Mrs. Law at the Pembroke street house she had said to herself that if her aunt had been ill, or in trouble, she would have done her best to take care of her. Well, here it was. Aunt Margie was helpless, suffering, and in a hospital charity ward.

"If this were only a dream," she whispered, "but it isn't. It is just like coming home from school again to find mother crying over 'poor Margie' and her troubles."

She tried to make some plan for the future which would make it possible for her to leave her aunt to the care of others, but at last with a little smile of scorn at her own limitations, she accepted the fact that she was facing the most difficult problem of her existence.

“Only it is not a problem; it is simply a fact. I have got to take care of her, and probably live with her the rest of my life.”

She thought over her resources with a little shiver of apprehension. The few hundred dollars in a Boston savings bank would not go far toward paying surgeons and physicians. Aunt Margie would have to remain in the free ward until she was able to leave the hospital. Not for a moment did Rosalind consider the possibility that death might intervene, and settle the question of her responsibilities toward her aunt. She knew that would not happen. Young men, with life promising them every joy, would be slaughtered by thousands in beleaguered France; young women and children would suffer, starve and die; but Aunt Margie would not die. She would recover, possibly a cripple, but always to be a part of Rosalind's life. She could not sleep that night, but before morning came she was in a much better frame of mind. If she did not do her best for her aunt now, she knew that she had proven her own unworthiness. “Per-



haps this is my opportunity to rid myself of my self-seeking, of my desire to have every thing my own way;" she thought, recalling her promise not to center her thoughts and plans upon herself. The dream, of which she had hardly thought for days, came back, and she believed that now she understood its meaning.

In spite of her sleepless night Rosalind was in the kitchen at an early hour to help Mrs. Spencer prepare breakfast.

"I wanted to," she declared, in response to Mrs. Spencer's reminder that it was her last morning, and that a day's journey was before her. "I have loved staying here," she added.

"Well, I guess — I guess —," Mrs. Spencer's voice faltered, and she turned away. One of her apron strings finally yielded to the unusually strong pull inflicted upon it, and Rosalind's last glimpse as she drove away beside Mr. Spencer in the Concord wagon, was of Mrs. Spencer reaching vainly behind her for the missing string.

The journey to Boston was uneventful. Absorbed in her own thoughts Rosalind was hardly conscious how the hours passed before she found herself walking through the North Station, and then hurrying into the subway and a car for the South End.

Mrs. Weevely was expecting her, and listened to Rosalind's brief explanation of the accident that had

befallen Mrs. Law, with more sympathy than Rosalind would have credited her with.

"It's hard for you, Miss Allan. And I will say that it ain't every niece who would see her duty as clear as you do. I've got six nieces; two in Brockton, and four in Lowell, and all they care about me is that I've a house for them to stay in when they come to Boston for a day or two shopping."

"My aunt would tell you that I didn't care much for her," Rosalind responded with a little smile, as she started up the stairs to her old room. "But I guess it isn't loving people that makes us do the right thing, we do it because we must."

Mrs. Weevely turned into her own sitting-room a little discouraged. Lodgers such as Miss Allan were not so easily found as in former years. She had wondered lately if it could be that the South End was a less desirable locality than when she was born, in the same house where she now lived, sixty years ago. To be sure most of her old neighbors had moved to Brookline, and there were a good many people like herself who let rooms, still it was not possible that Pembroke street could be less desirable than the crowded West End or the remote suburbs of Roxbury.

She recalled Madame Ress, and wished that she had shown the little French lady a more cordial kindness. Madame Ress was caring for helpless

children in France, and had appealed through the columns of a Boston evening paper for money for the French orphans, and Mrs. Weevely's generous contribution was as much a belated tribute to her former lodger as a gift to France.

Rosalind was tired out and slept soundly. She meant to take a noon train the following day for New York. In the meantime she would draw her money from the bank, and explain to her employers why it was impossible for her to begin work in their office.

When she was dressing the next morning Mrs. Weevely tapped at her door.

"You come down and have breakfast with me this morning, Miss Allan, and I want you to feel that this is only a little visit," she said, a little appealing note in her voice. For Mrs. Weevely had reproached herself in her own mind for not appreciating Miss Allen's good qualities more highly. The fact that Rosalind was giving up all her own plans to care for Mrs. Law, who Mrs. Weevely now recalled as frivolous and selfish, had made a great impression on the landlady. She thought a little wistfully of her own nieces, and wished that she had more affection for them. In a dim way she was conscious that love was the only human protection against the ills of life. So does a little leaven work from heart to heart.

Rosalind accepted gratefully, and when she bade Mrs. Weevly good-bye that morning it was with a new sense of friendliness.

It was still early in the morning when she entered her old office, and she was surprised to be greeted so cordially by her old associates. News of her accident had accounted to them for her long absence, and she was conscious of a certain regret that she could not again begin her former work among them.

Mr. Roland Frisbie had told Miss Madden that he wished to speak with Miss Allan as soon as she arrived at the office, and Rosalind rapped at the door of his private office, wondering a little what Mr. Frisbie had to say to her.

He greeted Rosalind as if they had met on the previous day. Without any reference to her long vacation he began promptly on the business that he wished to discuss with her. He informed her that her former position had been filled satisfactorily: "So much the better," thought Rosalind, but before she could speak he continued. "We are very glad, however, that you are ready to begin work again. Miss Madden reminded me of your knowledge of French, which makes you especially valuable to us just now."

Rosalind was about to interrupt him to offer her explanation and her regrets that it would not be

possible for her to remain in Boston, when she realized that Mr. Frisbie was telling her that the firm desired her services in the New York office, and that her salary would be increased.

Mr. Frisbie was greatly pleased by Miss Allan's prompt acceptance of the arrangement. He wondered vaguely why such a capable young woman should have taken so long a time from business, and then recalled that the book-keeper had mentioned a bad accident as the explanation. He scribbled an address on a card, and informed Miss Allan that his brother would be glad to have her report for work at the New York office as promptly as possible. Mr. Frisbie smiled when Rosalind thanked him, and said that she would start for New York on the noon train, and bade him good morning.

When Mr. Frisbie smiled even a stranger would understand why he had been expected to save the heathen, and why charitable societies yearned to give their funds into his keeping, and Rosalind left the office wondering why she had always supposed Mr. Roland Frisbie to be stern and unapproachable. "I believe he is kindness itself," she thought.

"A nice, business-like young woman," Mr. Frisbie reflected, as the door closed behind her. Probably her manner was the result of being employed in his office. He opened a drawer in his desk and took

out a small brown-covered book in which were recorded a list of names of various people whom Mr. Frisbie wished to remember, and his reasons for so wishing. If Rosalind had been in great trouble, or deformed, or unfortunate in any way, Mr. Frisbie would have had no difficulty in recalling her to mind, but prosperous-appearing, well-dressed people could usually look after themselves very well, and therefore had little interest for Roland Frisbie, and for that reason the little brown-covered book was very useful to him.

As Rosalind came into the outer office, a little bewildered by this new development in her affairs, she turned toward the book-keeper's desk to speak with Miss Madden, who was already leaving the little railed-in enclosure, where she passed her days in company with a large safe and a number of stout ledgers.

Miss Madden was a stout, smiling person who was always ready to declare that work was the chief blessing vouchsafed to humanity. She was quite sure that happiness was so interwoven with work, loyalty and a charity toward the follies of other people, that there was no excuse for those who persisted in finding fault with the conditions of life. She greeted Rosalind warmly, and congratulated her on the new position.

"I expect you won't have a minute to call your

own," she declared, as if this was the thing most to be desired.

She inquired if Rosalind was at all familiar with New York, and if she had any friends there.

"I was never there in my life, and do not know a person in the city," responded Rosalind, adding quickly, "except my aunt who is ill and in a hospital."

"Well, I didn't suppose you would know much about the city," said Miss Madden, "so I have taken the liberty to write to a cousin of mine who takes boarders. Her house is on Eighteenth street, and that isn't so very far from the office. It's a good quiet place, and she won't over-charge you, which is more than can be said of most places." Miss Madden had written the name and address of her cousin on a slip of paper and Rosalind received it gratefully. She was glad of the opportunity to be friendly with Miss Madden, who received Rosalind's thanks with a beaming smile. She said to herself that she had always known Miss Allan was a real nice girl; only shy, and a little bit too dignified. "She seems more alive now, somehow," reflected the book-keeper, as she walked beside Rosalind to the elevator and bade her an affectionate good-bye, returning to her ledgers with a little glow of satisfaction over the results of her own friendly efforts in Rosalind's behalf.

Rosalind was glad of the address of a possible boarding place. It had solved one of her problems, and she realized her great good fortune in the fact that a position was ready for her on her arrival in New York. Rosalind was not a "leaner," but she had a certain sense of comfort in the remembrance of Miss Madden's parting assurance.

"Now, if I can do anything for you, any time, you just let me know," Miss Madden had said, and Rosalind was sure that Miss Madden was equal to whatever she might promise.

Rosalind began to feel that she had been unduly despondent. It was going to be difficult in every way to take care of Aunt Margie, but somehow it would come out all right, she assured herself. The bustle and movement of the city awoke something of her old energy, and she reached the South Station and purchased her ticket for New York in a much more hopeful frame of mind than had been hers since she had received the letter concerning her aunt.

As she entered the train she purchased a paper, and Wright Peters' name stood out in large type at the head of a column on the front page. "BOSTON BOY DOWNS GERMAN PLANE!" she read. Breathless and afraid she read on until the story told of Wright's safe return to the French lines. Then she leaned back in her seat and closed her eyes. Safe, when the story had been cabled,



but how could she go on with her daily work and know that every moment of Wright's life was at the mercy of a German bullet? And with the shadow of his danger clouding her spirit she again recalled her dream. "You need not be afraid," sounded in her ear. It was as if she again saw the shadowy figure, and heard the friendly voice of her vision.

It was raining when the train reached New York, and Rosalind, tugging her heavy suitcase, made her way to the street car which would take her nearly to her destination, and in a short time she was ringing the bell at the address Miss Madden had given her. Rosalind was expected, and the maid who opened the door in response to her ring said that her room was all ready, and that Mrs. Smith would come up and speak with her in a few moments.

The room proved to be a narrow hall bedroom on the second floor. Rosalind had but taken off her damp coat when Mrs. Smith appeared in the doorway. She was a small, white-haired woman with an appealing smile. Her shabby black dress seemed to have been made for a much larger person, and her general appearance was that of a woman with little margin either of physical strength or of money. It was soon evident that she considered her cousin Miss Madden a person of importance, and that,

because Rosalind was a friend of hers, she would do her best to make her new lodger comfortable.

The room was chilly, and dimly lit by a single gas burner, and Rosalind was glad to accept Mrs. Smith's friendly invitation to follow her to the basement dining-room, where the maid who had let Rosalind in was setting the table for the evening meal. Mrs. Smith gave Rosalind a comfortable chair near the open grate where a scanty coal fire burned smoulderingly. At the appearance of her mistress the maid had immediately disappeared, and Rosalind was soon to discover that she was the only servant in the house.

"I'll have to start up the furnace before long," said Mrs. Smith a little mournfully, as she noticed Rosalind move her chair nearer the fire. "I'm moving about so much that I don't realize when the house is chilly, but some of my lodgers are quick enough to mention it. It isn't that I begrudge the coal so much as it is that I can't keep looking as neat as I ought to, and take care of the furnace."

Rosalind agreed sympathetically that a furnace was a difficult proposition, and Mrs. Smith continued. "I don't sit down to table with my boarders, for I wait on table, and it isn't pleasant to keep jumping up every minute. The boarders don't like it, and I don't like it myself." The little woman hesitated a moment, and then, as if half frightened at her

own courage, said. "I thought, maybe, you being a friend of Amelia's, that perhaps you'd have a little bite of dinner with me here before the boarders come?"

"Oh, I'd like it so much," Rosalind responded eagerly. "I believe I was dreading sitting down to dinner with so many people," she added, as Mrs. Smith opened a folding table in front of the grate.

Mrs. Smith's face brightened.

"Well, I'm sure I shall enjoy it. I don't often have what I would call 'company,'" she said, a delicate flush coming over her worn face. "Now you just excuse me a minute while I step to the kitchen." She was back in a few minutes, closely followed by Hannah. Both maid and mistress were smiling, and Rosalind began to realize that there was an air of festivity in the shabby, dark room.

Mrs. Smith placed a chair for herself and sat down opposite Rosalind, who now remembered that she had had nothing to eat since her early breakfast in Boston. She was hungry, and ate the well-cooked chops, the creamed potatoes, and stewed tomatoes, followed by a fruit pudding and a cup of excellent coffee, with enjoyment.

Mrs. Smith asked more questions about Amelia Madden than Rosalind could answer. It was Miss Madden, Rosalind discovered, who had loaned Mrs. Smith the money to establish herself in the lodging

house five years earlier, and who had since stood ready with assistance at various times of ill-luck.

"And when my husband and son were living, and I had a comfortable home of my own, Amelia would never come near me. I used to think she didn't care a thing about me," Mrs. Smith confessed, with a little smile at her own evident mistake. For she was quite sure that Amelia must care a great deal about her to be so ready with assistance.

Rosalind smiled in response. She went to her room before the boarders appeared, after telling Mrs. Smith that her kindness made her feel quite at home, to Mrs. Smith's evident satisfaction. Rosalind had spoken of having an aunt in the Presbyterian hospital, and Mrs. Smith suggested that before going to bed Rosalind should step out to the drug store on the corner of the street, and telephone to ask in regard to her aunt's condition.

"You'll sleep better if you get good news," she said, and Rosalind followed the suggestion. The attendant who answered her call said that there was little change in Mrs. Law's condition, and advised Rosalind to call at the hospital the next morning between eleven and twelve.

On returning to her room she found that her trunk had arrived, and busied herself with unpacking. She realized that her few gowns were

worn and shabby. Her last year's suit, after it had been cleaned and pressed, would do very well for office wear, and she decided that by changing the trimming on her last year's hat it would be presentable. But she resolved to purchase new boots and gloves as soon as she received her first week's salary, for she realized that her appearance was a distinct business asset. She intended putting the money she had drawn from the savings bank on deposit, so that she could draw on it when necessary for her aunt's comfort.

She read over the account of Wright's flight, holding the paper close to the flickering gas light, and triumphed in his unflinching courage. For a little time she forgot her own problems, and the uncertainties of her future. She had a cheerful capital of memories—a very real property, after all, and one which yields a good rate of interest. Her last waking thought was of her flight with her lover over the fields and shore to the wind-swept island.

The next morning the sun was shining when Rosalind awoke. She looked about the shabby little room with a sense of entering a new existence, in which the beautiful was not to be considered, only the things essential for life. But she was not depressed or anxious. Her thoughts were full of the kindness shown her by Miss Madden, by Mr. Frisbie, and of Mrs. Smith's friendly welcome.

"You are surrounded by love," she whispered to herself, hardly conscious that she was repeating the words heard in her dream. She breakfasted with the other boarders, who greeted her indifferently.

It was exactly eleven o'clock when Rosalind went up the steps to the hospital. After stating her name and errand to a tired young woman she was told to wait a few moments and some one would speak with her.

The nurse who came listened a little disapprovingly to Rosalind's explanation that it would not be possible for her to pay but a small sum for her aunt's care, informed her that Mrs. Law had not spoken any intelligible word since her arrival at the hospital, and directed her to the ward where she would find her aunt.

A friendly young doctor met Rosalind at the door of the ward, and led her to the bed where Mrs. Law lay. Her eyes were closed, and but for the little moaning sound that came from her bloodless lips, it might have been the figure of a dead woman.

The doctor described the case and its possibilities to Rosalind before she left the hospital. She told him that she wanted to do whatever was in her power to do for her aunt's comfort, that she was entirely dependent upon her salary, and stated the amount. The young physician listened with what

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he believed to be "a gravely professional" air, but which in reality was an expression of very human sympathy and understanding. He assured her that Mrs. Law would have as good care as it was in the power of the hospital to give.

Rosalind left her address at the office, and found her way to the street. Her thoughts were filled with an infinite pity and sympathy for that swathed and bandaged figure with its closed eyes and moaning lips.

## CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

**R**OSALIND soon settled into the routine of the office. Her work was interesting, and she had the consciousness that she performed her duties in a satisfactory manner. Her boarding place was comfortable and Mrs. Smith seemed always on the alert to show some friendly interest or favor to "Amelia's friend." Each day at the end of her day's work, Rosalind visited the hospital. For several weeks there was but little change in Mrs. Law's condition. But early in January she was pronounced out of danger, and by the middle of the month Rosalind was notified that her aunt could be removed from the hospital. She had not yet regained even the remembrance of her own name, but the physicians assured Rosalind that the cloud over her aunt's mental faculties would gradually disappear, and at no late date she would regain her former intelligence. The injured leg had been saved from amputation, but it was probable that Mrs. Law would remain a cripple. Her only apparent interest was in her food. She would often ask for special sweets, or



angrily refuse some dish which had been specially prepared for her.

Rosalind drew on her fund to purchase the necessary dressing-gowns, slippers and underwear that Mrs. Wright required. She was sure that somewhere Mrs. Law had an excellent assortment of fine linen, gowns and wraps, and a supply of expensive toilet articles, but where! An advertisement of inquiry for anyone knowing the address of Mrs. Margaret Law, or of any information in regard to her, failed to bring any response. Rosalind had no knowledge of her aunt's annuity, or of any address where she could make any inquiry in regard to her aunt's affairs. It would no longer be possible for her to remain with Mrs. Smith. She had now the direct responsibility of caring for a helpless, penniless cripple, and she must secure living quarters for her aunt and herself at as small expense as possible. She talked the matter over with Mrs. Smith on receiving the notice from the hospital. It was probable that Mrs. Law would have to have some one with her during the time Rosalind was in the office. Rosalind's salary of twenty-five dollars a week would hardly cover their living expenses and an attendant for her aunt, and there was no time to make inquiries.

"Now, Miss Allan, you let me talk this over with Hannah," suggested Mrs. Smith. "Hannah has

seen a good deal more of life here in New York than I have and she has relations and friends. Like as not she might know of some place where you could go, and somebody who would keep an eye on your aunt without expecting to be paid more than you earn yourself."

Rosalind agreed. Hannah was Mrs. Smith's servant and friend. Without her efficient help and advice it was probable that Miss Amelia Madden might have found greater scope for her generosity. She was a middle-aged Scotch woman, and she listened to Mrs. Smith's version of Rosalind's difficulties with set lips and an expression of grim disapproval. But when Mrs. Smith concluded she said.

"I could tell Miss Allan of a place that maybe would do, if she's not too proud-like."

"She's not proud at all, Hannah, poor thing, and no living soul to look to for help," Mrs. Smith responded.

"There's most always somebody raised up," Hannah declared reprovingly. "I'll talk with Miss Allan myself."

It proved that Hannah had a sister who lived in a small tenement on the East Side. Hannah thought that Mrs. McGouldric would let two rooms, as a former tenant had departed without paying a week's rent. Mrs. McGouldric took in fine laundry,

and was always at home, Hannah explained, and it was Hannah's opinion that her sister would be willing to keep an eye on the "poor thing" when Rose was at work.

Rosalind listened eagerly, and assured Hannah that such a plan was better than anything she had dared to hope for. "That is if I can afford to pay what your sister will charge," she added.

"We could step over to her place this evening, and ye can talk it out with her," said Hannah. And that evening Hannah and Rosalind journeyed across the city to see Mrs. McGouldric.

The four room apartment was on the ground floor of a shabby tenement house, on a narrow side street. Mrs. McGouldric, as stout and smiling as Hannah was thin and severe, listened to Rosalind's needs as explained by Hannah.

"I'd be glad of decent folks like yourself moving in, Miss," she responded, "and I could give your aunt a bite with meself, if she's not too proud, at noontime, and to be sure I'd see no harm came to the poor creature when you're not here."

After a little further conversation, and a look at the two ill-furnished and inconvenient rooms, Mrs. McGouldric said that the rent would be six dollars a week, and that she would have to charge three dollars a week more for Mrs. Law's lunches and service.

Rosalind agreed promptly. She thought herself fortunate to secure a place at so reasonable a sum. It was much better than she had dared to hope. She could prepare breakfast for her aunt and herself in Mrs. McGouldric's kitchen, and their evening meal as well. She thanked Hannah gratefully as they left the house.

"'Tis a sharp bargain my sister has made with you, Miss Allan," Hannah responded, a little apologetically. "She's the hard woman on a bargain, but 't is not for herself she craves money. Her only girl has made a bad marriage, and looks to her mother for help with the children." Hannah did not add that a good portion of her own small earnings went for the same purpose.

Rosalind drew a quick breath as she assured Hannah that Mrs. McGouldric's charge was reasonable. Here it was again, she thought, the endless chain of human obligation to the helpless. After all, was not that the great purpose and meaning of life? To make it a little smoother for stumbling feet.

The next day arrangements were made for Mrs. Law to be taken to her new home. Rosalind paid the nominal charges of the hospital, and when she had purchased a comfortable chair for her aunt, and necessary articles for the comfort of an invalid, she found that less than a hundred dollars remained to her credit in the bank.

The first days in her new home proved very difficult for Rosalind. Mrs. Law could not sleep for any length of time, and whenever she awoke she would call out as if afraid, and Rosalind would hasten to try and soothe her, lighting the small kerosene stove, and heating milk for her aunt to drink, and finally watch her go happily to sleep. She was up at an early hour in the morning in order to get their breakfast and clear away before starting for the office. Her aunt had to be got up, bathed, dressed, and established in her big chair by the window, before Rosalind left the house.

It was a work of infinite patience, and Rosalind did it with a tenderness of which she had not believed herself capable. "It will end by my loving Aunt Margie," she sometimes thought, for this helpless appealing invalid seemed an entirely different person from the dainty, selfish woman who had claimed every luxury at whatever price to herself or others.

Now and then Rosalind was sure that there was a glimmer of intelligence in her aunt's eyes. She talked a good deal, but it was the talk of a child, interested only in the things about her.

When the first breath of spring came whispering through the narrow street she was able with a little help from Rosalind or Mrs. McGouldric to walk a few steps. Her eyes lost their unmeaning stare,

and she became less patient, demanding more attention, and scolding Rosalind if she failed to respond promptly to her demands.

Rosalind would not own to herself how tired she was. Each morning it seemed increasingly difficult for her to get up and attend to the necessary work. She wrote to Wright each week, but told him nothing of Aunt Margie, or of her own difficulties. She wondered if he ever received her letters, for he made no reference to them in the brief messages that she received from him.

One morning in May Rosalind was awakened by a scream from her aunt, and hurried into her room.

Mrs. Law was sitting on the side of her bed looking about the room as if she had never seen it before. She knew Rosalind instantly. Not with the knowledge which had grown up in the past weeks of Rosalind's care for her, but with the old resentful recognition.

"What are you doing here?" she asked angrily, "and where are my clothes? I knew that auto would hit us," and she began to cry helplessly.

She would not let Rosalind touch her, and screamed and whimpered alternately, until Rosalind lost patience, and returned to her own room and dressed, knowing that there would be no more sleep for her that night. So things could be even worse than they had been for the past winter, she thought,

as she put on her shabby skirt. With Aunt Margie conscious of what had befallen her how would existence be possible? She smiled a little grimly at her own reflection in the narrow mirror. There were dark circles under her eyes, and tiny little lines on her forehead and about her mouth. Her skin was dull, and the black hair, which had formerly been so carefully brushed and cared for, now looked dull and lustreless. She wondered what had become of the radiant creature who had danced down the moonlit road toward the old Wright house, less than a year ago. She no longer reproached Aunt Margie in her thoughts as the cause of the burden that had fallen upon her. She realized that Margaret Law was as helpless a creature against the forces of life as she had found herself to be. She thought of Miss Madden, and had a moment's temptation to tell her of this new complication. For Miss Madden had visited Mrs. Smith at Easter, and had spent an evening with Rosalind. It was evident that she now regarded Rosalind with a new admiration.

"You've tackled a big job," she had said, looking at Mrs. Law, who sat near the stove complaining ceaselessly of the cold, "and you'll never get any credit for it. Not that it matters," she added hastily, and Rosalind had smiled and agreed that nothing mattered very much.

Miss Madden had returned to Boston to tell

Rosalind's story to her old associates. She declared that Miss Allan was a wonder, a perfect wonder. Not only was she capable and efficient in her work, but she was a marvel of unselfishness. Shabby! Miss Allan was shabbier than any woman she'd seen in New York, Miss Madden declared with a triumphant air, as if that was the last word of praise possible. Mrs. Law received her full dues. According to Miss Madden's description, she had wasted a fortune, and then thrown herself in front of an automobile in order to make Rosalind take care of her.

The story of Rosalind's daily life, as told by Miss Madden, was an epic of sacrifice. It filtered through the outer office to the ears of Mr. Roland Frisbie. He listened with a vague recollection that Miss Allan was the young woman he had sent, at Miss Madden's suggestion, to the New York office. He wondered if she really had made any sacrifice to care for an aunt? He rather questioned the probability of such a story, and when he left his own office he stopped beside Miss Madden's desk and asked her a few questions. Miss Madden replied as fully as time, Mr. Frisbie's time, permitted. She was sure he would tell his brother to raise Rosalind's salary if he knew all about that aunt. She knew Mr. Frisbie was always interested in people who had a hard time. She remembered



hearing that in his youth he had wanted to be a missionary, but had given it up because his mother had hysterics whenever he mentioned it.

Mr. Frisbie returned to his own room when Miss Madden concluded, and took out the little brown book, and read what he had written a few months earlier about Rosalind Allan.

He sat down at his desk and allowed himself to wonder if Miss Madden was justified in all that she had said about the young woman. Mr. Frisbie was inclined to doubt the possibility of such unselfishness in a woman. He recalled very distinctly that his mother had not been unselfish; quite the contrary. The entire Frisbie household had been at the mercy of her whining, exacting demands. It occurred to Mr. Frisbie that he would like very much to be assured that this girl was doing all that Miss Madden claimed. He was rather pleased to remember that he had a perfectly good reason for going to New York immediately, and finished his duties for the day with a certain eagerness to be able to get the evening train for New York, and appeared at his brother's office on the day following Mrs. Law's brief return to her normal intelligence.

Mr. Frisbie had a brief interview on business and family affairs with his brother, looked over the new offices, and at last permitted himself to stop beside Miss Allan's desk.

"I hope you remember me," he said, with the smile that Rosalind so well remembered.

He talked with her for a few moments, and noticed the girl's tired look, and the little lines about her mouth. He agreed with Miss Madden that it would not easily be possible for a young woman to wear shabbier garments than Rosalind's faded waist and worn skirt, and he began to be hopeful that she really was bearing a difficult burden. Mr. Frisbie owned to himself that if there was an unselfish woman in the world he was more than ready to offer her homage. He acknowledged that he was absurd to hope to find the loyalty, love, and charity which his soul demanded more than the lesser graces of life, in a girl of whom he knew only what Miss Madden had told him. Nevertheless he decided that he would call at the address where Rosalind lived, and make sure that a part of the story, at least, was true.

Mrs. McGouldric met him at the door.

"Yes, Miss Allan did live there, the poor thing. A slave she was and no less, to a crippled aunt, and what might be the gentleman's errand? Mr. Frisbie assured her that he had only called to inquire about Miss Allan for a friend, who wished news of her. And Mrs. McGouldric watched him depart with a proud sense of having defeated some deep-laid scheme against Rosalind's well-being. When

Rosalind returned that night she described the visitor with such accuracy that Rosalind assured her that it must have been some insurance agent, as she knew of no one who at all resembled such a person, and Mrs. McGouldric agreed, a little regretfully.

That evening a large box arrived from an uptown florist. It was filled with spring flowers: lilac, iris, columbine, and sprays of fragrant honeysuckle. Mrs. McGouldric's clumsy pitchers and bowls were filled with them, and Aunt Margie crooned and simpered over the box, declaring that there was a mistake, that the flowers were intended for her; and Rosalind wondered if her aunt might not be right, for there was no one who would send flowers to her.

Mr. Roland Frisbie was in the office the next day. The firm had an important case in the courts, and his brother found it an easy matter to persuade him to stay on and give his advice and assistance. A few days later when Rosalind left the office in the late afternoon she met Mr. Frisbie at the door of the building.

"May I drive you home, Miss Allan?" he asked. "I have borrowed my brother's car, and I am a careful driver." He smiled as he spoke, as if he felt sure that all the assurance she could ask in regard to him would be as to his skill as a chauffeur.

It had been a very difficult day for Rosalind. In the morning her aunt had refused either to speak to her or to eat the breakfast that she had prepared. She had reached the office tired and nervous, and had made a serious error in a letter to the French consul. It was time for a letter from Wright, and it had not arrived, and all these things made her feel that life was almost more than she was equal to. To see Mr. Frisbie waiting for her gave her the first pleasant moment of her day.

"Thank you," she responded gratefully. "I shall be very glad to be taken home, for I was dreading the long walk."

In former days such a thing as the elder Mr. Frisbie noticing her existence would have seemed as impossible as the appearance of Jove as a conductor of a street car, but now she was only conscious of being very tired, and glad that she would not have to walk home. Car fares had become an important consideration to Rosalind. She rode only on stormy days.

Mr. Frisbie helped her into the luxurious run-about and seated himself beside her. He guided the car skilfully through the traffic into more quiet streets, and turned into Central Park.

"It's too warm to stay indoors to-day," he said, "and this is the next best thing to a real country road."

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Rosalind was too tired to talk, and her companion seemed to realize it. He was pleasant and friendly. He spoke of the war; of the hardships the women of France were bearing so heroically; and when he told of a young Boston man, named Peters, who had received a medal from the French government for valor, Rosalind glowed and brightened, and seemed to forget her troubles and fatigue. The hour in the fresh air and the friendly companionship sent Rosalind home with new courage. Mr. Frisbie left her at the head of the narrow street. She did not want to answer the questions that would have followed her arrival at the door of the tenement house with Mr. Frisbie.

After a day of anguished rebellion and complaint against Rosalind for the squalid quarters in which she found herself, Mrs. Law had apparently sunk into a dull patience, half-forgetful of her condition. It was speedily evident that she had little affection or gratitude toward Rosalind. She demanded far more attention than formerly, and refused to eat the simple lunches Mrs. McGouldric prepared, insisting that Rosalind should purchase delicacies whose price meant that Rosalind herself must do without her own lunches. When she endeavored to find out something about her aunt's former address, and questioned her about her affairs, Mrs. Law became stubbornly silent. Rosalind decided

that her aunt could not remember, and ceased to question her.

Several days passed before Rosalind saw Mr. Frisbie, and then she found him again waiting to drive her home. He followed his former route to the Park, with a little questioning smile toward Rosalind.

"Yes, indeed," she responded. "You are giving me my only outings this summer."

"What about your vacation?" he asked.

"Not this year," she answered. "I have an invalid aunt, and it is easier not to go away."

"Miss Madden spoke about your aunt," he confessed. "I think you are very brave, very splendid about the whole affair. But it is hardly fair that you should lose all your youth over it."

Rosalind was conscious of a sudden desire to weep. She was so tired, and nobody seemed to care what happened to her, and Wright was so far away. But she managed to smile a little instead, and, almost without knowing what she was saying, she found herself asking Mr. Frisbie if he would care to hear a very wonderful dream.

"Yes, tell me," he said, with a little thrill of emotion that this tired, shabby girl should wish to tell him her dreams. So it was the Honorable Roland Frisbie to whom Rosalind told the vision that she had meant to tell only to Wright Peters.

"It has been so real to me," she explained a little shyly, "that I have turned to it for comfort, and I really haven't been afraid."

Mr. Frisbie's face had a new expression as he turned to look at Rosalind. The dull eyes behind the big spectacles had grown dark with emotion, and his voice had a new note of tenderness.

"My dear girl. I didn't believe that there was a woman like you in the world. Your vision could have come only to a soul as crystal clear as yours. Could you not let me help you with this burden you have taken on yourself? Could you think of me as your best friend? Your husband?"

He spoke quickly, and his left hand rested gently upon hers. He had a certain assurance that he was offering a good deal, and hardly doubted but that Rosalind would give him a favorable answer. At first he was sure that she was silent through surprise, but as she drew her hand gently from his tightening clasp he understood, and wondered a little at her lack of good judgment.

There was a little silence between them, and Mr. Frisbie was the first to speak.

"I understand, my dear girl. You can't think of me as your lover. But I assure you I would be a very patient and faithful husband, and I could do many things to make your life more pleasant," he said. As he thought over his own words later on,

he regretted that he had suggested that his wealth could influence her.

"I am to marry Wright Peters when he comes home from France," Rosalind replied simply. She wondered what had prompted Mr. Frisbie to ask her to marry him. She was quite sure that he was not in love with her. And she was right. It was his old emotion of sympathy, of the desire to help bear the world's burdens, which had led him first to discover Rosalind and become her friend, and that now had convinced him that he had found a road to happiness through the self-sacrifice and unselfishness of this girl.

"When he comes home?" Mr. Frisbie responded a little questioningly, as he swung his car round. "Wright Peters is a fortunate young man," he added quickly. And again he spoke of Young Peters' great courage; of his remarkable plane. And listened with surprise when Rosalind told him of her own flights in the airship.

Mr. Frisbie said good night in his usual friendly fashion, adding that it was good-bye as well. He was returning to Boston the next morning.

Rosalind went slowly into her close little room. She wished that Mr. Frisbie had not had the impulse to speak to her of marriage.

"Now he will never want to see me again," she thought regretfully, "and I like him so much."



## CHAPTER NINETEEN

MRS. LAW had promptly demanded her rings and her own clothes, on that first morning of her return to sanity, and Rosalind had given her the purse of gold links which still contained the few dollars that had been in it at the time of the accident, and the rings, that Rosalind knew must soon be sold if her aunt's demands for luxuries continued. She had explained that her dress was ruined, and asked her aunt to tell her where to send for her things. But Mrs. Law would not. She regarded Rosalind with hostile and suspicious looks, slipped the rings over her thin fingers, and kept the purse constantly within reach.

A few days after her ride with Mr. Frisbie, Rosalind entered the tenement house one night to find that Aunt Margie had vanished.

"She told me that you knew all about it," declared the astonished Mrs. McGouldric. "A trunkful of nice clothes came for her this morning, just after you left. She said a friend had been keeping them for her, and I helped her dress. She said I could

have these things," and Mrs. McGouldric pointed to the things Rosalind had purchased for her aunt, which were piled up on Mrs. Law's bed.

"But how did she get away? When did she go?" Rosalind asked.

"'Twas about two o'clock. I went out to the corner store and telephoned for a taxi for her. She wore a beautiful dress," concluded Mrs. McGouldric admiringly.

Further questioning revealed that Mrs. Law had written and received a number of letters during the past two weeks.

"She has been bright enough ever since that morning when she seemed to come to herself, and made such a rumpus," said Mrs. McGouldric. "As soon as you were out of the house she was calling me every few minutes to do something for her, and asking all sorts of questions. I don't believe I could have put up with her much longer, Miss Allan. And don't you worry about her. She knew just where she was going, and where to lay her hands on money, or I miss my guess."

Rosalind did not worry about her aunt, but she was stunned by her unexpected freedom. She wondered if all sacrifices came to nothing, as this seemed to have done. A week after her aunt's departure Rosalind received a letter post-marked Atlantic City. It was from Mrs. Law. She wrote

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to express her highly unfavorable opinion of Rosalind's conduct in having kept her shut up in a New York slum for months without care or suitable food. She wrote that she had secured good medical advice, and proper care, and expected to fully recover her former good health.

Rosalind's sense of humor helped her to find a little satisfaction in the letter, and she vowed to herself that it was a mistake to take any circumstance of life as really serious.

"Very likely I may have to do this same thing over, with possible variations as to conditions," she thought as she tore the letter to shreds, and made her final preparations to return to Mrs. Smith's.

By midsummer Rosalind was no longer shabby. The purchase of a simple and becoming hat, a blue linen suit, and some well-fitting waists helped her to something of her former interest in the daily events of her life, and when Mr. Roland Frisbie stopped over in New York, on his way to a friend's house on Long Island, early in August, he wondered a little at the change in her appearance. He almost regretted that he had sent her a box of roses on reaching the city. He had heard through Miss Madden of Mrs. Law's flight, and had imagined Rosalind as depressed and unhappy. It was rather a disappointment to him to find that she had no apparent need of his friendly sympathy.

The roses carried his visiting card this time, and Rosalind thanked him for them when he stopped for a moment at her desk.

"I have a favor to ask," he responded. "I want you to try and imagine me as an elderly friend of Mr. Wright Peters, and let me take you somewhere for dinner to-night. We can motor to some restaurant outside the city where possibly there will be a little coolness."

Rosalind accepted promptly. She was grateful to him that he included Wright in his friendly regard for her, and she felt sure that he wished her to understand that his interest in her was henceforth only that of a friend.

It was agreed that he should call for her at her boarding place. Rosalind looked forward to the evening with a pleasant sense of not being entirely shut off from the joys of life. She had resolved to forget the months passed with Aunt Margie. She knew that she would have kept on month after month, year after year, in her self-appointed task of caring for a helpless creature, until either her aunt or herself had died. And this consciousness gave her a sense of inward strength. But she rejoiced that, by no act of her own, she had been set free.

As she changed her linen suit that afternoon for an old gown of white voile, that she had recently

repaired and made wearable, she wondered if she might not talk of Wright to Mr. Frisbie. She so seldom spoke of her lover to anyone, not even Mrs. Smith had ever heard Rosalind mention his name, that she had a certain delight in thinking that perhaps Mr. Frisbie would tell her of Wright's later triumphs, and listen with interest to what she could tell him of Wright's unselfish determination to give his service to France. Rosalind was right in thinking that unselfishness had a charm for Mr. Frisbie. As he helped her into the car he felt a little disappointed. He had idealized Rosalind as a tired, shabby, unselfish young woman. His thoughts had been so centered on the beauty of her courage and self-denial, that he had hardly perceived other more notable attractions, and this smiling girl in her modish white gown, becoming hat, and carrying a cape of dull blue cloth seemed a stranger to him.

He guided the car toward the river, almost regretting the impulse that had prompted him to suggest the ride, but after a little his mood softened, and as Rosalind had hoped, he spoke of Wright. He asked if she had known Wright long, and Rosalind ventured to tell him of the old Wright house and something of her romance. Mr. Frisbie proved a good listener; he realized, as Rosalind had been sure he would, all Wright's unselfishness, and

before the car stopped at the riverside restaurant, where a table on the broad veranda had been reserved for them, Rosalind had told him a good deal of Aunt Margie, and of her own hope that sometime her home would be in the old Wright house, near the neighbors to whom she had become so attached.

"And suppose Aunt Margie should again become dependent on you?" he questioned, as they lingered over their simple meal.

"I quite expect that she will," responded Rosalind, smilingly, "and I am sure that never again can it be so hard to bear as it has been. You see, I know now just what to expect."

The ride home in the cool air of the late evening was delightful to the tired girl.

"I have had a beautiful time," she declared, as she bade him good-night.

"May I not send a letter to Mr. Wright Peters, and congratulate him?" responded Mr. Frisbie.

"Oh, will you? I know he would think you were very kind," she said, and ran up the steps with a lightness of heart such as she had not known for months.

Mr. Frisbie sighed as he drove slowly toward his brother's apartment. But it was not altogether the sigh of a disappointed lover. Miss Allan had no great need of him after all, he decided, and with

that thought she ceased to be of supreme interest to him.

Rosalind did not look at the war news the next morning. It was a busy time in her department, and she was intent on her work when she was called to the telephone. It was Mr. Frisbie's voice that greeted her. She smiled at the seriousness of his tone.

"Miss Allan, there is a special edition of the morning papers. There is news of Wright Peters. Have you heard it?" he said, speaking very quickly.

"More triumphs?" she asked lightly.

There was no response, and instantly Rosalind understood.

"Tell me what it is, Mr. Frisbie," she said quietly.

"Bear it, my girl, be brave," came the response.

"Yes," she faltered. She did not need to question further. Wright had been killed; she whispered it over to herself as she hung up the receiver, and sat in the box-like enclosure staring at the telephone. In a few moments she stood up, and walked toward her desk.

"I must go home," she said to the young woman whose seat was next her own, and pinning on her hat she left the office.

She was hardly conscious of the direction in which she was going until she realized that she was at Mrs. Smith's door. As she went up the stairs to her

room it seemed as if the figure of the dream walked beside her. But now there was no comfort in his presence.

"You cannot help me now," she whispered, and the shadowy presence vanished.

She sat down, staring at the wall, and saying over and over. "No one can help me now." Not for a moment did she dare to think that there could be any mistake in the news that Wright had been killed. Not for a moment did she hope. She said to herself that she had known when they stood in the old garden, when she had told him that she would not prevent him from carrying out his wish to go to France, that he would never return.

"Miss Allan?" Mrs. Smith was standing in the open door looking at her with anxious eyes. "Are you sick, Miss Allan? I didn't know you were home until a gentleman from your office called to ask about you. He is downstairs now. Do you feel able to come down?"

"Yes," replied Rosalind, and followed Mrs. Smith down the stairs.

Mr. Frisbie stood waiting in the narrow hall. He held her hand closely in his own as they entered the little reception room.

The news in regard to Wright Peters, that his plane had been shot down inside the German lines, had awakened a new sense of responsibility in Mr.



**Frisbie.** He had a sudden rage against the nation which had made slaughter a profession. He recalled **Wright's** unselfish sacrifice with a sense of shame that he was among those who sat safely at home in a "neutral" country, content with words, and making no personal effort to help the cause of righteousness.

France shone through his spirit, and his resolve that now his utmost effort must be given in her behalf, as freely as young **Peters** had given his youth, was taken at that moment.

But here was **Rosalind**, the girl who, only a short time ago, he had asked to share his life, who was now bereft of all her happiness. He looked at her with anxious eyes, but what word of comfort was there to be said? He had a brief impulse to tell her that he was grateful to her for loving this man who had died for a great cause, a cause beyond and above all human happiness. But he had no words for his own emotions when he saw the girl's stricken face.

"**Rosalind**, I am going to France," he said, and she turned toward him with a kindling look of hope.

"Do you mean that he is only injured? That you are going to bring him back to me?" she asked.

He shook his head.

"No, I mean that I am ashamed to stay here, safe," he responded. "I shall go as soon as it is possible for me to make my arrangements."

But Rosalind was hardly conscious of what he said. She had slipped from the chair, and Mr. Frisbie's call brought both Mrs. Smith and Hannah hurrying with exclamations of surprised sympathy, to her assistance.

"She has had bad news," Mr. Frisbie said. "The man to whom she was engaged has been killed by the Germans."

## CHAPTER TWENTY

**D**AYS passed, and Rosalind lay in the narrow room as one stricken beyond recovery.

She was not ill, she declared patiently to Mrs. Smith and Hannah, who, overworked as they always were, gave her the most tender care.

"I will get up to-morrow," she would say each morning, but a week went by, and she had made no effort to rise.

The physician whom Mr. Frisbie had summoned agreed with Rosalind. She was not ill; over-tired, evidently, and the shock of bad news had overcome her, he said, and announced cheerfully that rest was just what she needed, and assured Mrs. Smith and Mr. Frisbie that Miss Allan would be quite all right in a few weeks. She was young, and youth overcame such things. Mr. Frisbie, his thoughts filled with plans for his speedy departure, accepted this decision without question. He was infinitely sorry for the grief which had overtaken her, but his sympathy was overshadowed by his eagerness to be of service to France.

For the first time in his life he thought with

satisfaction of his own physical strength and fitness to endure hardship. He could at least dig trenches, carry wounded men to safety, do something to prove that all Americans had not the souls of slaves. As he went about the streets and saw men and women intent on their amusements, their luxuries, saying now and then, but not often, thank God, that it was "fortunate the United States had been kept out of War," he was conscious that his loyalty to democracy wavered. If it was democracy that had made the ideals of America into a god of personal comfort and safety, it would henceforth mean little to him.

He spoke to his brother in regard to Miss Allan and her engagement to Wright Peters, who was now the hero of young America, and Rosalind's employer declared that however long a vacation Miss Allan wished to take her salary would continue. He sent a parting gift of fruit and flowers to Rosalind, but Mrs. Smith thought it was best that he should not see her to say good-bye. Mr. Frisbie agreed almost cheerfully. He resolved, however, that if he lived to return from France, he would ask her again to be his wife. He said to himself that she would need a friend, that she would perhaps never again know real happiness.

And so Mr. Frisbie sailed away to France, to work as he had hoped, in caring for its wounded heroes.

Mrs. Smith had written promptly to Miss Madden of Rosalind's condition, and the book-keeper had promptly decided that a vacation in New York in mid-August was exactly what she most desired, and she arrived at Mrs. Smith's at the end of the second week after the news of Wright Peters' accident.

Rosalind lay in bed, very white, with little expression in the dark eyes which stared up into Miss Madden's anxious face.

"Have you any news for me?" she asked.

"Of course I have," Amelia responded briskly, "but you ought to sit up to listen to it. Why don't Cousin Ann have a comfortable chair in this room?"

Almost before Rosalind could realize what was happening a big easy chair was brought into the room, and Amelia was helping her into her dressing gown.

Rosalind began to wonder why Miss Madden wanted her to sit up. A gleam of hope came into her heart. It must be, she thought, that there was news of Wright's safety. And when Miss Madden came into the room bringing a little silver tray on which stood a tall glass in which ice and thinly sliced lemon mingled temptingly, there was a faint color in the girl's cheeks.

"Now, Miss Allan, when I said I had news I meant every word of it. You drink this, and I'll

begin." And Miss Madden seated herself and nodded smilingly.

Rosalind's heart-beats quickened. Oh, if it might be that Wright lived! And she fixed her eyes eagerly on Miss Madden's smiling face.

"I'll bet you haven't seen a paper since you decided not to get up?" began Amelia.

Rosalind shook her head.

"I don't see what cousin Ann was thinking about that she didn't bring you the paper every single morning, and night, too, for that matter;" she continued earnestly.

"Yes? Yes?" whispered Rosalind, leaning forward eagerly.

"Well, the whole world is ablaze, excepting America. America is writing letters to the German Emperor and saying that they are sure he doesn't mean to be impolite, by sinking our ships, and that we hope he will write us by return mail and say so. French women are being murdered and worse. And those who escape the Germans are sending their sons and lovers to die, while they starve at home. The papers are full of the martyrdom and heroism of French women."

"Yes?" repeated Rosalind, a little impatiently, "Wright, Wright," her thoughts repeated the beloved name. How slow Miss Madden was with her news.

"And every day thousands of young Englishmen are giving their lives, and glad to, because they can't live and not show they are men," continued Miss Madden, almost forgetting Rosalind for a moment as she recounted England's glory. "And to think you have been lying here and not knowing about it!" she concluded, a little weakly.

"Wright is dead!" said Rosalind.

"I know just how proud you are of him," Miss Madden responded promptly. "So proud that you'll be glad and happy all your life. I guess he was proud of you, too, when you let him go. He must have said to himself that you were as brave as any woman in France, and he couldn't say more than that."

Rosalind's white hands covered her face, and tears filled her eyes. Was this all Amelia Madden had to tell her, she thought bitterly?

Miss Madden made no effort to comfort her.

"I'll step down and see if there's anything I can do to help Cousin Ann, she's pretty near tired to death," she announced calmly, "and I'll bring up the evening paper when I come back," she added, as she left the room.

"I don't know as I'm much better than a German myself," she thought, wiping her eyes, as she crossed the hallway to the big front room, from which Mrs. Smith had resolutely dismissed a lodger on the day

previous, in order that "cousin Amelia" should have the best room the house could offer.

A few minutes later Miss Madden made her way to the basement dining-room. "I am going to move Miss Allan into my room, Cousin Ann," she announced. "She is sitting up, and it will do her good to have a change."

Mrs. Smith regarded her cousin admiringly.

"There! If you don't beat all! You haven't been in this house two hours, and you have done that poor girl more good than all the medicine in the world. I said to Hannah that Miss Allan needed cheering up as much as anything. You always was one to sympathize with folks in trouble, Amelia. I guess nobody knows that better than I do."

Miss Madden smiled a little grimly to herself as she listened to Mrs. Smith's admiring praise. It was an hour later when she returned to Rosalind's room.

"I am going to move you into the front room," announced Miss Madden. "It's a good deal cooler and more pleasant than this room. I guess you can walk that far with my help."

Rosalind agreed. It did not make any difference, she thought, and when Hannah toiled up the stairs bringing toast, custard, and a bit of cold chicken, she was surprised to find Rosalind comfortably



established by the window in the front room, and Miss Madden reading aloud an account of German atrocities from the headlines of an evening paper. Miss Madden moved a small table beside Rosalind's chair.

"It's a shame, Hannah, for you to have to climb up three flights of stairs with a heavy tray," she said, and the color flooded Rosalind's cheeks. She wanted to tell Miss Madden that she didn't want Hannah or anyone else to bring her anything. All she wanted was to die.

Hannah noticed the flush with a sense of resentful wrath against her mistress's visitor.

"'Tis no trouble, and I'd not begrudge it if it was," she responded, and left the room with a very poor opinion of Miss Madden, and of her treatment of Rosalind.

When Miss Madden had said good-night, and retired to Rosalind's room, the girl lay awake thinking, for the first time since she had heard Mr. Frisbie's warning "be brave," of something besides herself. She was thinking of Hannah. Of how many times Hannah had gone up and down those long flights of stairs to wait upon her, to bring her a cool drink, an appetizing lunch, and often merely to ask if there was not something she wanted. She remembered Hannah's days of toil in the hot kitchen, and the fact that the friendly Scotchwoman was no

longer young. Then her thoughts flew to those innocent sufferers of whom Miss Madden had told her. "Wright died for them," she thought, and again she seemed to be in the old garden, her lover's arms were around her, and she was telling him that she knew he must go.

"I have failed him, after all," she whispered. "I haven't even remembered his courage."

And now she recalled gratefully all the loving kindness that had surrounded her through these difficult weeks, and again she lived over the vision of her dream. "Surrounded by love," she murmured, and closed her eyes to peaceful slumber.

The next morning when Miss Madden brought in the breakfast tray Rosalind was dressed.

"I think I can go down for my luncheon this noon," she said with a little smile, as Miss Madden turned out a cup of fragrant coffee.

"I was pretty sure you would feel better if you got out of that closet of a room of yours. I slept there last night, or at least I tried to sleep," and Miss Madden sighed a little. Rosalind had a new sense of remorseful shame. It was her fault that Miss Madden had to sleep in the narrow chamber, but before she could speak, Miss Madden continued. "I'll step right down and see if Cousin Ann won't set us a table in the little reception room, and you and I will have our meals there, until we can get away."

“Away?” echoed Rosalind in a startled tone.

“Why, yes. This is my vacation; you don’t want to keep me shut up in this hot city, I hope! I was planning that we would get off by day after to-morrow. I telegraphed that Mrs. Spencer you boarded with, and she says she can take us both just as well as not.”

## CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

IT was a very pale and tired Rosalind whom Mr. Spencer helped from the carryall to Mrs. Spencer's waiting embrace. For Miss Madden carried out her plan, and in spite of Mrs. Smith's inward doubts, and Hannah's outspoken opinion that to her mind, "it wasn't stopping much short of murder to take the poor thing on such a journey," Rosalind seemed none the worse for the trip.

The Spencers had read the story of Wright's fate in the papers, and but for the hasty word of warning: "Don't speak of her trouble," which Miss Madden found opportunity to whisper, both the kindhearted people would have quickly expressed their own sense of loss and sympathy with Rosalind. As it was they welcomed her with such a warmth of affection that a little glow of comfort crept over her saddened spirit.

The remaining weeks of Miss Madden's vacation were sufficient to place her high in the esteem of both Mr. and Mrs. Spencer. Not only did she agree with Mr. Spencer's opinion as to the probable fate of the United States when it became a province

of Germany, as he gloomily predicted would be the result of its present policies, but her revolutionary suggestions as to the plain duty of every American citizen roused his commendation, and for the first time he began to see agreeable possibilities in Woman Suffrage.

Mrs. Spencer had at first thought Miss Madden dwelt too much in her daily conversation on the sufferings of the women of Belgium, the heroic sacrifices of the women of France.

"Land sakes, ain't Rosalind give up all she had," she confided to Mrs. Griffith, "and ain't it nearly killed her? But this Miss Madden never has a word of sympathy for Rosalind. You'd think to hear her talk that trouble was sort of to be expected, and welcomed, and that nobody really knew what trouble was unless they happened to have Germans for neighbors."

"Rosalind seems to set by her," responded Mrs. Griffith thoughtfully. "I can't seem to make up my mind that Wright is really dead. When I recall how he'd fall out of that airship of his here, into the river, time after time; ketched in the tops of trees, and always able to get over all his accidents; why, somehow I feel as if he'd be coming home again pretty near well as ever he was. Don't you s'pose he will, Mrs. Spencer?"

"No. I don't s'pose nothing of the kind. Maybe

'twould work out that way in a story, but so far as any story I ever read being anywhere near like the way things happen in real life, why, all I can say is that it ain't like real life in Riverdale. Wright Peters is dead. My land! Mrs. Griffith! Didn't you read it with your own eyes in 'The Boston Transcript'? And ain't the papers all over the world been full of it?"

"Yes," agreed Mrs. Griffith a little despondently, "but I don't agree with you about stories. Just think about Wright's mother. I guess that was as romantic as any story could be. I guess stories are true sometimes, even when they turn out well." But Mrs. Spencer shook her head. She knew it was no use to cherish vain hope.

"All we can do is just let Rosalind know that we think about her almost as if she was our own girl," she rejoined, and the two friendly women exchanged a quick look of understanding.

Rosalind had soon realized all that Miss Madden had tried to do for her. She was ashamed when she remembered that she had failed to face her loss with any shadow of the unselfish courage that Wright had shown in his decision to give himself to France. And she renewed her vow to be no longer sorry for the limitations of her own life.

Miss Madden ended her stay at Riverdale with a sense of satisfaction in the results of her plan. At

the end of two weeks Miss Madden announced that she must return to her work. "With Mr. Roland Frisbie in France, and Mr. Charles all ready to start, I'd better be tending to my job while I have one," she declared, and Rosalind realized that her friend had already overstayed her vacation. Rosalind did not attempt to thank Amelia Madden for rescuing her from the slough of despondency and suffering into which the news of Wright's death had hurled her. But she had a comforting sense that Amelia understood all that she lacked words to express.

Rosalind was gaining strength with every day, and on the morning of Amelia's departure, with Dink close at her heels, she walked a part of the way to the station with her friend, and waved her a smiling good-bye after they had parted at a turn in the road.

"Bless her, she's made up her mind to do the best she can," thought Miss Madden, as she trudged on alone. "I guess she realizes now that I had to be considerable firm with her; it had to be brought home to her that there were other people suffering besides herself. I guess she thought I was hard-hearted; but it's all right now as far as I'm concerned. Rosalind will find that there are pleasant things in life after all. Happiness gets mislaid sometimes, but it isn't often lost altogether." With

these comforting thoughts for company she made her way to the lonely little railway station, and purchased her ticket for Boston. As she took her seat in the train she gave a little sigh of satisfaction, and owned to herself that she was glad to be returning to her accustomed duties. "I'll be glad to get back to the office, and get some rest," she thought.

But with her return to her work Miss Madden did not put Rosalind out of her thoughts. Various plans for her friend's future occupied her attention. She realized that Rosalind needed some immediate interest and occupation, and she wondered if it would not be possible for her to occupy the old Wright house, and perhaps earn a sufficient income for her needs from the place.

It was a few days after Amelia's departure that Rosalind decided to visit the old house, and with Dink for a companion, she set out. It was now September, and already there was a hint of autumn in the cool wind that moved among the trees and the wayside grasses.

Rosalind walked slowly, occasionally waiting a moment for Dink's return after mad rushes in pursuit of visionary enemies.

The old garden was again overgrown with intruding weeds, and the grass-walk, so carefully kept the preceding year, was now covered with a stout growth of grass. But the tall larkspurs were in



blossom, and lady's-delights and sturdy garden pinks smiled their welcome. For a time Rosalind wandered about the garden, visiting the brook, to turn swiftly away from the rush of memories that the singing stream whispered. She opened the front door of the old house, and went slowly in.

It was twilight before Mrs. Spencer's anxious eyes perceived the girl coming along the road, with Dink walking soberly beside her.

"I must go over again to-morrow," Rosalind said that night, as she spoke of all that must be done in the old garden to restore it to order. Mrs. Spencer agreed cheerfully; to have Rosalind interested in anything seemed the best possible road back to health, and the next morning she had prepared an excellent luncheon for Rose, and watched her start off "just as she used to do," thought the friendly woman, with a little sigh for all the girl's lost joy and happiness.

That morning Rosalind busied herself in the garden; she ate her lunch in the pleasant kitchen, and a little later started off across the meadow toward the Griffith farm.

Mrs. Griffith came hastening to meet her.

"Well, I am glad to see you!" she declared, leading Rosalind toward the treasured parlor, and opening the blinds that the afternoon sun might come glimmering into the room. She drew Rosalind

down beside her to a seat on the haircloth sofa, and regarded her with smiling, approving eyes.

"Now, when are you coming over to live in your own house?" she asked, and without waiting for Rosalind's reply, continued, "I'm sure if 'twas so Wright could send you a message 't would be for you to make the old house your home."

"If I could only have a message from him. Do you suppose people ever do hear from those they love best — after —" she hesitated, and Mrs. Griffith finished the sentence, "After they've gone to shining shores? Well, why not? I guess I'd have found some way to get a word to my little girls if I'd been called away first. I look at it this way: We have to go somewhere when we leave this body, and wherever it is we know our way back; and maybe we don't go so terrible far away from those we love, after all. Maybe word don't come to us who stay here in just the way we expect, but I guess most of us get a message. Perhaps it comes in a dream, or something kind of whispers to us when we are quiet, and brings comfort. Ain't it natural that Wright would seem nearer to you in that old house than any other place on earth?"

"Yes," responded the girl eagerly, "this very morning I felt as if he was close beside me in the garden, and I was almost sure he was waiting for me at the door."

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“Maybe he was, that is if he ain’t in some German prison, and thinking of some way to get back to you. I ain’t never had proof that Wright was killed. Hurt, and hurt bad he may be, but land! wasn’t he ’most killed that summer when he was making his machine, and always getting over it in no time? Why don’t his brother start out and make sure one way or another?” and Mrs. Griffith looked toward Rosalind, half-fearful that she might have said more than was wise. But Rosalind responded without hesitation. “His brother did everything that was possible to find out about Wright, and so did Mr. Frisbie, but there was nothing to give any hope.”

“Well, I don’t feel as if he was dead,” declared Mrs. Griffith gravely, “If he is you’ll have some word from him. Someway he’ll manage it.”

## CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

“SIMON, what say to asking Rose to go along to church with us this morning?” ventured Mrs. Spencer on the Sunday following Rosalind’s visit to Mrs. Griffith. “She’s a sight better since she began going over to the old house every day, and she talks about Wright now as if maybe she was going to see him again.”

Simon, who with many contortions of his tightly closed mouth, was endeavoring to shave before the little square mirror that hung over the clock-shelf, turned a lather-spotted face toward his wife.

“She ain’t turning toward spiritualism, is she?” he questioned fearfully. “She’s considerable took up with Ann Griffith, and you know as well as I can tell you what Ann Griffith says, free and open!”

“Well, Ann may be right. How do we know but that folks who pass on can come back,” responded Mrs. Spencer courageously, but added quickly: “It ain’t no time to argue for nor against. What I asked you was about taking Rose to church. It’s a nice day, and perhaps she’d like to go.”

Simon was now stropping his razor vigorously,

and nodded his approval. "Ought to have asked her long before this," he grumbled accusingly. Mrs. Spencer made no response, she had suddenly remembered the bacon she had set before him that morning for breakfast, and that he had eaten heartily. She realized that it was not the time to reason with Simon, and with a troubled spirit she went in search of Rosalind.

"Mr. Smith is a real good preacher, and it's a nice morning for a ride," she urged, standing in the door of Rosalind's room, and drawing her apron strings perilously near the breaking point.

Rosalind declared that she would enjoy going, and would be ready at once. It was evident that Mrs. Spencer was pleased by her ready acceptance, and Rosalind again reminded herself how little return she made for all the friendly kindness she received from the Spencers.

In spite of the bacon Mr. Spencer smiled approvingly as he helped Rosalind to a seat in the old carryall beside Mrs. Spencer. Dink, standing near the kitchen door, looked after them reproachfully as the big brown horse trotted briskly down the road. It seemed to Dink at that moment that humans and horses were in league against a dog's natural rights in companionship. He resolved, however, not to forget his own dignity and responsibilities by running after them when he had been

told to stay at home and protect their property. After all, he reflected sadly, it was not the fault of humans and horses that they could not understand dogs. Dink blamed the horse more than he did the family, and with a grumbling sigh stretched himself in front of the door.

For the past week Rosalind's thoughts had centered about Mrs. Griffith's suggestion that she should live in the Wright house, and she had now decided that it should be her home. On the way to church she spoke to Mr. and Mrs. Spencer of this intention, half-fearful that they might not approve, and was a little surprised at their evident sanction. Mr. Spencer turned to smile and nod his satisfaction.

"Just what we hoped you'd do," he said. "Not but what we'd like to keep you with us right along, because that's what would suit us complete, but we've been a little anxious for fear you'd be starting off to Boston or New York, and once in your own house you'll stay."

Mrs. Spencer's expression of relief and pleasure was as much due to Simon's apparent good-nature as to Rosalind's announcement. She had not doubted but that Rosalind would finally make the old house her home, so now her first thought was the hope that pork would no longer be an enemy to Simon's digestion and to her domestic happiness.

"If Simon can eat as much bacon as he did for breakfast and keep pleasant, I guess I needn't worry," she decided gratefully.

"I think I will go over to stay very soon," continued Rosalind, and before they reached the white church, over whose steeple Wright's plane had so often flown, it was settled that she should move into the old house the coming week.

Mr. Spencer left them at the church door to take his place in the choir, and Mrs. Spencer led the way to a pew near the pulpit.

As Rosalind looked about the bare little church and noted the reverent faces of the people, she wondered what was the help they sought, was it simply an endurance equal to the daily burden, or did they share the hope of an eternal life?

The clergyman, a slender, elderly man with delicate worn features, took his place in the pulpit, and as he gave the text for his sermon it seemed to Rosalind an answer to her vague questioning: "He hath been alway mindful of his covenant and promise, that he made to a thousand generations." It was the covenant of an enduring life, the preacher declared, a covenant that promised eternal redemption. With simple phrase and clear vision he assured his hearers that the promises of a life everlasting could not fail, that; "He hath been alway mindful of his covenant." The simple

morning service closed with the singing of the old hymn:

“How firm a foundation ye saints of the Lord,  
“Is laid for your faith in his excellent word,”

and the congregation filed reverently from the church.

At the door friendly greetings were exchanged by neighbors who seldom met except for these brief moments on Sunday mornings. Mr. Holden was one of the congregation, and hastened forward to speak with Rosalind. He knew that she was now the owner of the Wright place, and he had already resolved to make another effort to secure the long-desired meadow-land. He wondered, a little uneasily, if it would do to speak of business affairs on the Sabbath day? The fact that Miss Allan was able to come to church proved to him that she would soon be going to New York. It was an anxious moment for Mr. Holden. Fortunately Mr. Spencer settled his indecision by informing him that Rosalind had decided to make her future home in the Wright house.

“You don’t say!” responded Mr. Holden, adding quickly, that he was real pleased to hear it. But Mr. Spencer chuckled to himself as he started the brown horse toward home.

“I ain’t no mind-reader, but I could see ‘Meadow-



land' in big letters right across Holden's shirt front," he announced, turning to share his views with Mrs. Spencer and Rosalind.

"He's been trying to get hold of that meadow ever since the old Captain died, and if I hadn't spoke up just as I did, he'd have asked you to put a price on it before you got well through the church door."

"But I should not think of selling an acre," Rosalind responded quickly.

"That's right. Not but what you may feel different as days go on," said Mr. Spencer thoughtfully, recalling unjust taxation, and poor hay seasons.

"Well, Simon, just cast the matter from your mind for today," said Mrs. Spencer. "As I look at it we are sort of on honor to fix our thoughts on what Mr. Smith set before us, leastways until we get out of sight of the meeting-house," and this gentle reproof was sufficient to make Simon huffily silent until Dink's joyful and forgiving bark welcomed them home.

"I didn't see the Griffiths at church," said Rosalind that night as she spread the table for the evening meal, while Mr. Spencer by the western window consulted *The Farmer's Almanac* as to weather probabilities for the morrow.

"Ann Griffith ain't one much given to church going," responded Mr. Spencer, "she's one of the

kind that searches after false gods, in my opinion," he continued slowly. "Not but what she ain't one of the best women that ever stepped, because she is; but Ann's always had the notion that she was kind of responsible, here and hereafter, for her own salvation. She's been reasoned with considerable in times past, and the preacher we had here before Mr. Smith, went so far as to say that she was joined to her idols. But Mr. Smith seems to understand her. He's been heard to say that Ann don't need to go to church as much as most people, but he takes care who hears him say it."

"I liked the sermon this morning," said Rosalind.

"Ye-es, Mr. Smith speaks well," agreed Mr. Spencer a little regretfully, "that is, most times he does. But when he talks to those in grief and tells them that those who pass on are enjoying a good deal more than they ever did here, and that we ought to rejoice instead of mourn, why then 'tain't every one who can agree with him."

"Then he has never lost those he loved best," declared Rosalind.

"Well, he says we don't lose 'em, and he's had sorrow, say what you will. Seven years ago, or 'bout that, his wife and only son were drowned down at the mouth of the river. They were bound home from Bath in a sail-boat, and the boat capsized. Their bodies were found and brought home."

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Rosalind stood by the table listening eagerly, and Mr. Spencer continued.

“Twas kind of wonderful the way the minister took it. He went straight to the Griffiths, and he stayed there for nigh on to a week. There were church members who’d a welcomed him, and mourned with him, according to Scripture, but he didn’t seek them out. And he preached the Sunday after the funeral from the text: ‘For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away.’— I guess most of the folks that heard him could recall the sermon. It made this world and the one to come seem pretty close together.”

Mrs. Spencer, coming in from the milk-room with a pitcher of cream, was in time to hear her husband’s last sentence, and glanced toward Rosalind with a sense of apprehension, but Rosalind was evidently interested. She was very quiet during supper, however, for her thoughts were absorbed by the tragic story to which she had listened. When she went up to her room that night she remembered what Mrs. Griffith had said about Wright, that she was sure he would try and send her a message. She looked forward to seeing the elderly clergyman again.

“I guess Ann Griffith and I better have a cleaning-bee in your house before you move in,” suggested

Mrs. Spencer the next morning. "You can sort of oversee the job and tell us where you want things put. It won't take more'n one day to set it to rights."

"I am a nuisance, and I don't know what I can ever do for you and Mrs. Griffith in return for all your goodness to me."

"Land! Don't you worry about that. You're going to have plenty of chances now that you mean to live neighbor to us. You being young and spry we shall expect considerable from you," responded Mrs. Spencer cheerfully.

A day was decided on to carry out this plan, and on Wednesday morning the three women were at work in the old house at an early hour. Rosalind gathered up Wright's papers from shed and dining-room, and packed them carefully away with his other personal belongings. Neither Mrs. Griffith or Mrs. Spencer offered to help her with this. They both understood that Rosalind would find a certain nearness to her lover in this service. Mrs. Griffith spoke often of Wright, of his early adventures with the plane, and of Orrin's devotion to his "boss."

"And Orrin's been determined to go to France ever since he heard what happened to Wright," she said, "and for all that I know he's there by this time. It's nigh on to a month ago that his folks had word that he was in Canada, and all ready to

sail. And the strange thing is that his ma, who was always scared to let him ride a bicycle, says she's glad her son has courage enough not to let Germans over-run the world. Seems to think Orrin is going to stop the war right off."

"Perhaps he will," responded Rosalind, thinking of how proud Wright would be of Orrin's decision.

"Well, it's hard telling," said Mrs. Griffith "But if Wright isn't a prisoner in Germany then he's passed on to greater powers than he ever had here, and maybe he'll help Orrin."

It was dusk when Mrs. Spencer and Rosalind started for home. Mrs. Griffith had left an hour earlier. The old house was now ready for Rosalind to begin housekeeping for herself, and as she walked along beside Mrs. Spencer she was conscious that Amelia Madden had been right in saying that happiness is seldom lost. She knew that in coming to Wright's house to live she would find a certain happiness.

## CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

IT was a week after Rosalind had established herself in the old house when Mr. Smith, encouraged by Mrs. Griffith, came to see her.

It was now October, and the month had begun with several days of heavy rain. The roads were muddy, the path across the fields to the Griffith house was a succession of puddles, so that Rosalind had not ventured from home. It had not troubled her, for she had been occupied in making the house as comfortable as possible, and each morning Mr. Griffith had appeared bringing milk, and ready to do any errands.

On the day of the old clergyman's visit she had awakened to find the sun shining, and a keen west wind about its work of drying up the roads and paths, and had decided that in the afternoon she would make a neighborly call on Mrs. Griffith. Rosalind's thoughts were now seriously occupied with the necessity of speedily earning a livelihood. Her own savings had been exhausted by Aunt Margie's necessities, and she now realized that she

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must secure some means of earning money. She recalled Mrs. Griffith's suggestion of the previous year in regard to work in the spool factory, and resolved that during her visit that afternoon she would talk over her affairs with Mrs. Griffith, and ask for more information in regard to the position of book-keeper in the factory.

She was on the porch just ready to start on her walk across the fields when she saw Mr. Smith coming up the path. On the step stood Dink, his head cocked alertly, as if making up his mind in regard to the visitor.

Mr. Smith introduced himself, and Rosalind welcomed him cordially, and led the way into the sitting-room. She was glad that the fire was ready to light, and in a moment a cheerful little blaze brightened the shabby, pleasant room, and the old clergyman was seated near it, with Dink close beside his chair regarding the visitor with approving eyes. Rosalind sat nearby, and they talked of the old garden, of Dink, and Mr. Smith told of the beauties of Riverdale in winter. He had solved his own problems by a serene faith, but he knew that youth could not easily achieve so great a triumph, and as he glanced now and then at the girl whose great sorrow still seemed to set her apart from life, he was wondering earnestly if it was possible for any word of his to help her.

Almost unconsciously he began to speak of Wright Peters, and Rosalind listened with a sense of new comfort and strength.

"He chose the high adventure, and all who hear his name spoken henceforth will thrill to new impulse of courage and justice. He has won to a greater vision, for us who remain here life has a finer meaning because of his life."

Mr. Smith stopped suddenly. Useless words, he said to himself, and looked at Rosalind a little pleadingly, as if asking for her forbearance.

"Yes, yes I know," she responded quickly, that this kind visitor might feel himself understood. There was a little silence between them, and then Rosalind, with a light word of excuse, went to the kitchen and started the kettle to boil. She cut the loaf of new bread, drew out an old-time tray and spread it with a damask napkin, and set it with the blue tea-cups and tea-pot and a small rose-lustre pitcher filled with cream. As she busied herself about her pleasant task she heard the clergyman's voice and quickly realized that he was talking to Dink.

"He is going to be a real friend," she whispered to herself, with a quick little memory of all the gifts this old house had brought her of love and kindness.

"I wanted you to have a cup of tea with me,"



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she said smilingly, as she brought the tray into the sitting-room and placed it on the big round table. "You are my first real visitor, and I wanted to celebrate."

Mr. Smith smiled in response. He was a little tired, and it was very pleasant to be waited on by this friendly dark-eyed girl, to sit before the cheerful fire with the approving Dink at his feet and enjoy the excellent cup of tea, the good bread and butter and the preserved strawberries, these last from Mrs. Spencer's abundant store. Rosalind, sitting in the low rocker near the table, told her new friend of her first glimpse of the old Wright house.

"I fell in love with it. I wanted it for my home before I had even heard of Wright," she said, "and when I first saw him, and for nearly a year after, I did not even know it was his home." For the moment she put her sorrow from her heart in the wish to bring a little brightness to this man who had borne an equal loss with an unfaltering courage.

It was early twilight when Mr. Smith started for home. Rosalind and Dink walked with him to the road, and as he went on toward his lonely house the old clergyman thought very kindly of this solitary girl who had made him so welcome. It would be pleasant to come to this friendly house, he thought gratefully, and wished he could say some word that would help her. But how can the

old comfort youthful sorrow? he questioned humbly, with a little sigh at his own failures.

It was too late for Rosalind to visit Mrs. Griffith that afternoon, but she had been cheered and helped by Mr. Smith's visit. She recalled what he had said of Wright with joy, and, as she busied herself in preparing her evening meal, she knew that she was more content than she had believed would ever again be possible. She was just sitting down at the kitchen table when Mrs. Griffith opened the door.

"I've been expecting to see you all day," declared her visitor, and Rosalind told her of Mr. Smith's visit.

"It did me good. I feel as if I had always known him," she added.

Mrs. Griffith nodded approvingly.

"Mr. Smith is pure gold," she responded. "He's been tried and not found wanting. I'm real glad you've made friends."

Before Mrs. Griffith started for home, Rosalind had told her that she must set about some plan for earning money as soon as possible, and asked if by any chance the factory needed a book-keeper.

"I declare! If Robert wasn't saying this very day that the book-keeper at the spool factory had got a better job, going to Portland, and had left without a day's notice. I guess if the truth was

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known those factory folks don't pay their help any too well," and Mrs. Griffith looked at Rosalind a little questioningly.

"Probably they wouldn't pay me anything," said Rosalind. "I'm afraid I don't know much about book-keeping."

"Oh, they'll pay something. And you put right down there first thing tomorrow morning and speak for the job," said Mrs. Griffith, with a fine disregard of business efficiency. "The factory ain't a mile from your front door, you go right past it on the way to the depot. The work can't be real hard, and the walk to and from will be good for you."

It was finally agreed that Rosalind should apply for the position the next morning, and Mrs. Griffith said good-night with the feeling that Rosalind was beginning to face life with an adequate courage.

It was late that evening when Rosalind went up the shadowy stairs to bed. She was tired and did not lie long awake. That night the dream of a year ago again visited her. Once more she stood in a shadowy cathedral, and again she saw a dim figure move above the altar and come down the curving stair to her side. But now it was not a figure unknown, and half unreal. It was Wright Peters, with smiling lips that whispered: "Do not be afraid, you are surrounded with love."

Rosalind awakening in the quiet October morning

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told herself that Wright was surely dead, this was his message to her, that she might know that he was beyond earthly harm, and never very far away from her.

She went about her morning duties hardly conscious of what she did, the dream held her thoughts. But as she gradually remembered all that Mrs. Griffith had said to her, as she recalled Mr. Smith's belief, she was comforted. She said to herself that she must meet life on the same terms as did the women of France — with unfaltering pride and courage. A little scorn of her own selfish grief came into her thoughts. Rosalind made many high resolves that morning as she pinned on her shabby hat and started down the country road to ask for work in the spool factory.

## CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

**R**OSALIND secured the position of book-keeper, and found the work well within the range of her ability. The pay was small, she did not wonder that seven dollars a week had not been a sufficient inducement to hold their former book-keepers. But the hours were not long. She was not required to be at the factory until nine, and by three in the afternoon her labors for the day were completed, and she was at liberty to start for home, where Dink, a little puzzled over these daily absences, waited to welcome her.

As Mrs. Griffith had predicted, the walk to and from the factory was good for her, she found the work gave her a definite object in putting her troubling thoughts aside, and before Thanksgiving Rosalind realized that she had never been in better physical condition. She was up early each morning in order to prepare her breakfast and the lunch that she ate at noon-day. On her return in the late afternoon there was sufficient household work to keep her busy until evening, when she found

herself quite ready to stretch out on the comfortable old sofa and read or drowse the evening away. Each Sunday she was the guest of the Spencers', going to church with them and returning to their house for dinner. Often Mr. Smith was persuaded to drive home with them, and in the early evening he would walk with Rosalind to her door. She began to feel that she had found a place in the little community, and she sometimes pictured herself in the years ahead, when her youth was really over, and when, as an elderly woman, she would recall her days of romance and sorrow as far-off tales. But she had, nevertheless, a grateful sense that life had not wholly failed her.

Early in November she had written to Miss Madden asking her to spend Thanksgiving with her, and Amelia's prompt and pleased acceptance was duly received.

"I am real glad that she is coming," said Mrs. Spencer when Rosalind told her of the expected guest. "And I want you both to come to our house for Thanksgiving dinner. I'm planning on three kinds of pie that day, and 'twould be foolish and worse to set down alone."

Rosalind promised, she knew that Amelia would enjoy a visit with the Spencers, and she wanted the holiday to hold all the pleasure possible for her friend. For several weeks Rosalind had indulged

herself in vague plans for a future in which she and Amehia would live together in the old house. Perhaps they could establish a school, or earn a competence by gardening, selling vegetables, flower-seeds, and putting up jellies. She resolved to talk it over with her friend and see if it was too visionary a project on which to plan. With Amelia for a house-mate, and Mrs. Spencer and Mrs. Griffith for neighbors, she knew that she would be much happier than she had dared to hope.

"And when Aunt Margie is too old to wander about she can sit by our fireside," she reflected, with a little surprised wonder that the thought of Aunt Margie as a member of her household had no longer the power to shadow any possible future.

Miss Madden looked forward to her visit with a delight equal to that of Rosalind. She went about her daily duties for the week preceding her departure with so smiling a countenance that the other office employees were confident that: "Miss Madden's pay is raised again!" And commented a little enviously on the probable amount of her weekly salary.

She was to take a noon train for River Junction on the day before Thanksgiving, and it had been arranged that Mr. Spencer would meet and drive her to Rosalind's house. As she tugged her well-filled suit-case into the car that would take her to her destination she remembered that she had not

even glanced at the papers that day, and when the newsboy sauntered through the car with the careless announcement: "Just Out. Latest War News," she purchased a paper, but her thoughts were too pleasantly occupied to do more than glance at the appalling headlines.

She looked out at the November fields and distant hills, dozed a little, and awoke with a start to hear the brakeman shout "River Junction." She picked up dress-suit case and the neglected paper and hurried from the train to find Mr. Spencer awaiting her. He had many subjects of interest to discuss, and he looked forward to his passenger's sympathetic interest in his views.

What did she think about the American government now? he demanded. How much more was it humanly possible to bear from Germany without exterminating her? he asked. "It's high time this nation riz up as one man," he declared, and Amelia agreed cheerfully, hardly realizing to what statesmanlike project she was giving her approval. Her thoughts had flown ahead of the steady pace of the brown horse to the welcome awaiting her.

The early November dusk hid the familiar fields, there was a sharp wind from the river, and Amelia rejoiced to see the welcoming lights from the windows of the old house, and when, with a loud "Whoa," Mr. Spencer drew rein and the front door



opened and Rosalind came running out with an eager welcome, Amelia began to realize that Thanksgiving had really begun. It was small wonder that she entirely forgot the Boston paper that she had tucked down beside her in the wagon cushions. When Mr. Spencer reached home he discovered it, and carried it into the house to read after supper.

He did justice to the excellent meal Mrs. Spencer had prepared, and told her all he could recall of Miss Madden's conversation, then he drew the big wooden rocker near the side table where the lamp stood, and with a sense of well-earned and deserved comfort, he unfolded the Boston paper that Amelia had now entirely forgotten.

"Last Edition. Three O'clock," he read disapprovingly, remembering that the train left Boston at one. "'Tain't right," he muttered, "makes you doubt every last thing in the whole paper." There were the usual head-lines of German barbarities, accounts of the unfaltering courage of the French, of the blunders of the English, and half-way down a middle column his eyes were held by a line:

WRIGHT PETERS ESCAPES FROM A  
GERMAN PRISON.

Mr. Spencer read it over slowly, then he read on, not really crediting the story of Wright's being alive and on his way to his own country.

After re-reading the article Mr. Spencer took off his glasses, folded the paper and looked about anxiously as if in search of a place where it could be safely concealed.

"What's the news, Simon?" questioned Mrs. Spencer cheerfully, as she filled the dish-pan with steaming hot water.

For a moment Mr. Spencer hesitated, and his wife looked toward him anxiously.

"My land, Simon. What is the matter?" For Mr. Spencer was standing his eyes fixed straight ahead, and grasping the paper in both hands.

"I'm about sure it can't be true, and anyway, I guess 'twould be safer not to say a word about it until I'm sure," he said, looking at his wife as if he was hardly conscious that she was really there.

Mrs. Spencer ran toward him, and in a moment her tender arm was holding him firmly.

"Where do you feel the worst, Simon? Land, I hope 'twont prove a shock."

Mr. Spencer moved from her encircling arm.

"I'm all right. Let me be. This paper says that Wright Peters is alive, that he has been a prisoner in Germany and escaped. Listen," and adjusting his glasses he unfolded the paper, and read the account of Wright having been wounded, made a prisoner, and finally after many hardships escaping and reaching the French lines.

The unwashed dishes were forgotten while Mr. and Mrs. Spencer tried to decide what course to follow in regard to telling Rosalind this news. They were none too sure that it was true, and they hesitated to arouse Rosalind's hope without absolute certainty.

"You see, she's had dreams that make her sure that Wright has passed on," said Mrs. Spencer. "She kind of thinks that he's here a considerable part of the time, and if we carry this story and she begins to hope that he is really alive — Land, Simon, I do wish we could talk this over with Ann Griffith."

"I'll hitch up and we'll drive over," responded Mr. Spencer eagerly. He had been hoping that his wife would make this suggestion. Ann Griffith could be relied on to see a way out of difficulties. "It will be eight o'clock before we can get there, but that can't be helped," he added as he hurried out.

In the meantime Rosalind and Amelia had finished their supper, and drawn their chairs near the hearth, with Dink sprawled comfortably on the rug between them. Amelia had many things to tell Rosalind about Mr. Roland Frisbie, and the work he was doing in France. She had good news from Mrs. Smith and Hannah, to which Rosalind listened eagerly. Then Rosalind told of her own daily life, and of the return of her dream.

"Ever since then I have known that it was a message from Wright, that it was to tell me that he was dead, but that death did not separate us," she said.

Amelia, too, felt sure that Wright Peters was dead. But she rejoiced that Rosalind had found a source of comfort and strength enabling her to face life with adequate courage. Not until they were ready for bed did Amelia think of her Boston paper, and then without any regret that she had left it in Mr. Spencer's wagon.

When Rosalind opened the kitchen door the next morning she found a newspaper under the bottle of milk that Mr. Griffith brought each morning. "Amelia will be surprised to find a paper ready for her," she thought, as she picked it up and laid it on the kitchen table.

When the Spencers had arrived at the Griffiths the previous evening with their wonderful news Ann Griffith had listened with shining, undoubting eyes.

"Of course it's true!" she declared. "Ain't truth the most surprising and wonderful thing in the world? And we don't need prepare Rosalind for joy. It's the breath of life. You leave the paper, Simon, and Robert will take it over with the milk first thing in the morning." And so, reassured and rejoicing, Mr. and Mrs. Spencer started for their drive home.

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"It's coming out just like a story, after all, ain't it Simon, about Rose and Wright," said Mrs. Spencer happily, as the old wagon rattled along over the rough road. "And Ann Griffith didn't so much as say 'I told you so'; although it's what she predicted from the first."

"Ann Griffith would come mighty near being burned as a witch in times past," declared Simon. "She sees into things in a way that ain't given to most folks."

"So she does," agreed Mrs. Spencer, "and I count it among my blessings that I have her for a neighbor."

Mr. Spencer assented silently, his thoughts were centered about the return of Wright, and he was conscious of a certain uplift of his spirit as he recalled the young man's heroism. To himself, he owned that there was infinite hope for a nation whose young men were ready to face all peril to establish justice.

When Amelia Madden opened her eyes on that Thanksgiving morning, it was to see Rosalind kneeling by the hearth and setting a match to the curled birch-bark and apple wood on the old hearth; the little blaze sprang up instantly, and Amelia sleepily murmured her grateful appreciation. A big pitcher of steaming water stood beside the wash-stand, and the sun was streaming into the big comfortable chamber.

"Talk about the idle rich," said Amelia contentedly, "I feel as if I was beginning a new life."

"You will be sure of it when you taste my buckwheat cakes," Rosalind assured her. "And I am so glad you are here. I feel as if all sorts of good things were going to happen."

Rosalind hurried back to the kitchen, and Amelia made a leisurely morning toilet before the dancing blaze. She thought happily of Rosalind's improvement in health and spirits, and said to herself that this was going to be a beautiful visit.

"I'll wager my best boots that the Spencer's will have hot mince pie, and cider, and all the things I have always dreamed of having for a Thanksgiving dinner," she said to herself, as she looked from the eastern window of her chamber across the brown fields to the distant pines. Then, with a little regret that her own windows must ever overlook a dull city street, she turned away and went down stairs.

At the sound of her steps Rosalind called from the kitchen: "Come out to my lovely kitchen," and, "following her nose," as Amelia declared, she came into the pleasant room with its yellow painted floor, its braided rugs and shining, well-cared for stove. The table was set near the window, just as it had been that far-off summer night when Wright Peters had looked into the candle-lit room.

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"Here is a paper that Mr. Griffith brought," said Rosalind, "Read me the news while I beat up the cakes."

Amelia picked up the paper smilingly. She read the staring head lines, "yesterdays news," she commented, glancing down the page. "Rosalind!" she exclaimed in a startled voice. "The unbelievable has happened. Come and sit down."

Rosalind obeyed smilingly. She wondered lightly if Mr. Roland Frisbie had taken the Kaiser prisoner.

"Read on, I am prepared," she responded, sitting down at the end of the table and stirring the buck-wheat batter vigorously.

## CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE

IT was the middle of December when Wright Peters arrived at River Junction. Mr. Holden, as he declared afterward, could "hardly believe his own eyes," as they rested on the man whom he helped from the train, and who limped down the platform beside him. For Wright had not escaped from the German hate without harm. His left leg, bruised and injured when his plane had been shot down, and untended and uncared for in the German camp where he had lain helpless for weeks, would always be twisted and nearly useless. He would never again run lightly along the country roads, or across the rough pastures. He stooped a little, "like an old man," thought Mr. Holden resentfully, and there was an ugly scar across his right cheek, a friendly attention from the distinguished German officer who, according to the German account, had "rescued" him from his destroyed plane.

Wright was expected. For days an excited boy, who proudly filled Orrin's deserted place at the station, had raced over the road with messages for



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Rosalind, and Mr. Griffith was only just behind Mr. Holden in welcoming Wright, and in a brief time the young man was in the waiting sleigh and on his way to the Griffith farm, where Rosalind was waiting.

They were married in the sitting-room of the old Wright house the next morning. The Griffiths and the Spencers were the only guests, and as Mr. Smith read the marriage ceremony for those two lovers who had known the full glory of romance and sacrifice, his own heart thrilled with the remembrance of Wright's knightly adventure. He knew their future way led along the shining heights.

THE END





